

"We are realists... we dream the impossible" - Che



# Fire This Time!

## CUBA VS. BLOCKADE



Page 8

## SYSTEM CHANGE! NOT CLIMATE CHANGE!



Page 5

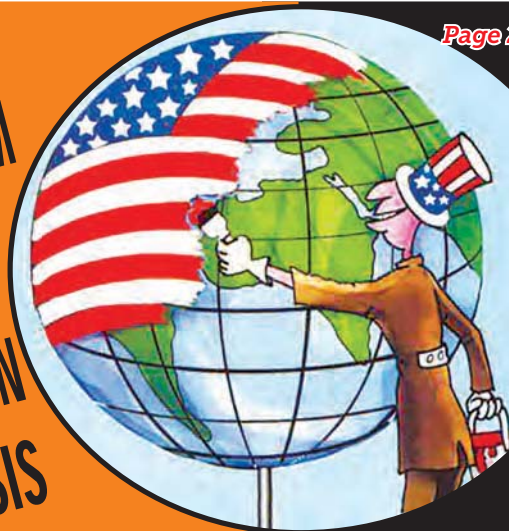
## SUPPORT POSTAL WORKERS



Page 12

## U.S. IMPERIALISM & IMMIGRATION CRISIS

Page 14



Page 2

NO FOREIGN U.S. MILITARY BASES

## REPEAL BILL C-51! SCRAP BILL C-59!

Page 23

## VENEZUELA SPEAKER TOUR



Page 24



STOP WAR ON  
YEMEN

Page 18





*By Janine Solanki*

The world today is defined by a new era of war and occupation. This is seen with foreign occupations like the U.S.-led occupation of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, and the U.S.-led war on Syria, U.S.-backed coups like the 2014 coup in Ukraine and sanctions such as the U.S./Canada/EU sanctions and economic war against Venezuela and Iran. This also included dozens of U.S. special forces secret wars in all continents. Today, every region of the world is engulfed by U.S.-led military aggression and intervention.

### **U.S. Number One Warmonger Anywhere**

How is the United States, the greatest imperialist force in history, able to reach so far and conduct so many military operations at one time? The map of the world that the U.S. government looks at is not the same that you and I look at. From the perspective of the U.S. Department of Defense, the world is a battlefield, on which every inch of the planet falls under six geographical "Areas of Responsibility" over which the U.S. has a "Combatant Command." This is complete with a

headquarter, a Commander and chain of command, and a collection of bases, military installments, or military agreements outside of U.S. borders. According to the U.S. Department of Defense website, the U.S. military operates in more than 160 countries, on all seven continents, with approximately 4,800 defence sites. An estimated 800 to 1000 of these bases are foreign bases, with approximately 450,000 soldiers stationed overseas according to Business Insider. These may be huge bases that mimic a U.S. town with McDonalds, American shopping centers and schools to cater to thousands or even tens of thousands of U.S. soldiers and

their families, such as at the Ramstein Air Base in Germany and the Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan.

U.S. bases in Europe also serve to assist the U.S. imperialist interests in Africa. U.S. bases in Italy, Germany and the U.K., alongside NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) member state's bases in the region, served as launching pads for the U.S.-promoted and the NATO-led war on Libya in 2011. From these bases, 26,000 aircraft sorties were launched over seven

# **CLOSE ALL U.S./NATO MILITARY BASES NOW!**



months, 42% of which resulted in airstrikes on Libya. Libya, which once had the highest standards of living in all of Africa, now seven years later is a chaos. As documented in a December 1, 2017 report by TIME magazine, Libya has become a haven for the slave trade and human trafficking. What else is USAFRICOM up to? A Military Times article on the most recent quarterly report from the Department of Defense Inspector General noted that during the summer of 2018, the U.S. military was conducting missions in at least 20 African nations!

### **Threatening Central and South America**

Across the ocean, USSOUTHCOM covers the U.S. military command of South and Central America and much of the Caribbean. One of three task forces in the region operates out of Soto Cano Air Base in Honduras, the U.S. Joint Task Force Bravo. While the Honduran constitution prohibits a permanent foreign troop presence, the U.S. has circumvented this by declaring their presence on the base as "temporary"... since 1982! The U.S. base in Honduras is a good example of how dangerous the presence of U.S. troops are, and how difficult it is to get rid of U.S. foreign bases. In 2008 the democratically elected president Manuel Zelaya had proposed converting the Soto Cano Air Force Base into a civilian airport. In 2009 President Zelaya was overthrown in a coup which at best the U.S. government was complicit in, at worst directly involved.

In a 2009 Associated Press report the deputy foreign minister under Zelaya accused the U.S. of having

involvement, including when the plane carrying Zelaya to exile against his will made a stop at the Soto Cano Base.

### **Occupying Guantanamo Base in Cuba**

Another arm of USSOUTHCOM is the illegally occupied U.S. base in Guantanamo Cuba. February 23, 2018, marked 115 years since the 120 square kilometres of Cuban territory was seized by the U.S., making it the oldest U.S. foreign base. While it retains use as a naval base, it is primarily, and infamously, used as an off-shore prison. On January 30th, 2018, U.S. President Trump signed an executive order to keep Guantanamo Bay prison open. The notorious prison, where the U.S. arbitrarily detains and tortures people, denying them of legal and human rights, has held close to 800 people under the guise of the U.S. so-called "war on terror." The executive

order signed by Trump is in line with statements that he made as a presidential candidate regarding Guantanamo Bay prison, that he would “load it up with some bad dudes.” While justice-minded people around the world have demanded the closure of the U.S. prison at Guantanamo, the Cuban people and government have also demanded the return of their illegally occupied territory. The occupation of Cuban territory is economically detrimental to Cuba and denies the full access to their strategic bay. The U.S. still imposes a cruel blockade on Cuba for over 55 years now and engages in subversive covert and overt actions against the sovereignty of Cuba. The fact that the U.S., a hostile force, is operating a military base on occupied Cuban territory presents a significant military threat to Cuba!

### Military Treat to Venezuela

The U.S. has been steadily expanding its foothold in Latin America beyond the bases in Honduras and Cuba. In 2008 the Colombian government had agreed to

Venezuelan have become literate, and over 2 million homes have been given to low-income Venezuelans. In 2015 the United Nations announced that Venezuela had reduced malnutrition by 50%! Despite these and many other advances, the U.S. has led an economic war of sanctions on Venezuela and supports Venezuela's right-wing violent opposition. Dangerous statements from U.S. President Trump have included that military intervention in Venezuela is an option that the U.S. “certainly could pursue” and that “we have many options for Venezuela including a

war on terror” and promises of liberation have resulted in the self-determination of the Afghan and Iraqi people being denied under ongoing foreign occupation. Quality of life from education to healthcare has decreased, and poverty and unemployment have increased. In Afghanistan, 2018 has been the record highest year for civilian deaths, according to the UN. In Iraq, over 1 million Iraqis have been killed as a result of the war, according to British polling group Opinion Research Business. The U.S. has also been conducting a brutal war in Syria for the past seven years, which first consisted of arming, funding and directing so-called “moderate rebels” in Syria from their bases in the region, including in Jordan. ,

Since Iran's 1979 revolution threw U.S. imperialism out of the country, the U.S. has been maneuvering to regain control of Iran, at the expense of Iran's independence and sovereignty. One can look at the map around Iran to see how U.S. foreign



**Protests Against U.S. Military Bases Around the World (Top: Japan, Right: Italy, Left: Afghanistan)**

grant U.S. access to seven bases, but this was struck down by Colombia's constitutional court in 2010. However, through previous agreements, the U.S. military still can have a presence of up to 1,400 U.S. troops in Colombia. U.S. foreign military presence also takes place through military exercises. In September 2018 Colombia hosted the 11-country UNITAS Pacific multinational maritime exercise, which included U.S. forces. U.S. military operations in Colombia are particularly threatening to Venezuela, which borders Colombia. In the last 20 years, the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela has put the interests of the people of Venezuela first, improving the quality of life for Venezuelans. More than 2.7 million

possible military option.” With US military operating in neighbouring Colombia and the U.S. participating in military exercises near Venezuela's coast, the threat of U.S. intervention in Venezuela could not be closer.

### The Middle East

In the Middle East (or “USCENTCOM” as per U.S. Department of Defense), the U.S. has gone another step from having military bases in the region to the full-on occupation. For the last 17 years, Afghanistan has been under U.S.-led occupation with the help of NATO, and Iraq has been occupied by the U.S. for now over 15 years. In both of these countries, justifications of fighting “the

bases are closing in around Iran. The U.S. occupied Iraq and Afghanistan border the east and west of Iran, and Bahrain with U.S. naval and air forces are opposite Iran's southern coast. Additionally, the U.S. has crippling sanctions against Iran, which have been reinstated and increased under U.S. President Trump. U.S. threats of intervention in Iran are no joke, as this field of war has surrounded Iran.

### Japan, China and North Korea

Looking to the Asia-Pacific region, this is what the U.S. Department of Defence calls “USINDOPACOM.” The U.S. has carried out their provocations and threats against North Korea with about 28,500 U.S. troops



stationed in South Korea. The majority of troops in the region are stationed in Japan, with about 50,000 U.S. soldiers in the country. 73.9% of U.S. bases in Japan are in the small but strategic southern island of Okinawa, close to the Korean peninsula. For the people of Okinawa, Japan, the U.S. military presence is a very real danger to their day to day lives, and strikes against their self-determination as the U.S. operates on their land with impunity. According to local police statistics in Okinawa, 741 serious crimes involving U.S. military personnel or civilian employees of the U.S. forces or their relatives were investigated between 1972 to the end of 2015. There were 574 convictions, including 129 for rape, 394 cases of burglary and 26 murders. These include the 1995 gang rape of a 12-year old Okinawa girl by three U.S. service personnel, and more recently in 2016 the rape and murder of a 20-year old Okinawa woman by a U.S. Army base worker.

Finally, USEUCOM operates in Europe as well as Israel and as already noted, serves as a launching pad for military operations in Africa. The USEUCOM's prime goal is stated on the USEUCOM website, as "detering Russia." The defensive language doesn't reflect the truth when it is U.S. and NATO bases, military exercises and weapons being built up on the borders with

Russia. The U.S. is engaging in provocations against Russia! Although over 60,000 U.S. troops are operating in the region, the most being in around 30 bases in Germany, the U.S. relies on working within NATO. With this great division of labour being shared among the 29 NATO member countries, the U.S. is better able to stretch its own forces and imperialist ambitions. This has been the case when NATO took over the occupation of Afghanistan, freeing the U.S. up to focus on their war in Iraq. This was also the case when NATO took over the war against Libya.

### **U.S. Military Basis and Destruction of Environment**

The U.S. government also disregards the environment while setting up their foreign military bases. As of 1992, the U.S. Army had identified more than 350 contaminated sites at its facilities in Germany and found that polluted wastes from these facilities had "begun to threaten the health of thousands of U.S. and German citizens" as documented by Michael Satchell in the 1992 report "The Mess We've Left Behind." While Germany has more leverage to get the U.S. to clean up, the same is not true for many poor and oppressed countries. According to an Institute for Policy Studies report in 2005, in Vieques, Puerto Rico studies have

found high rates of cadmium, lead, mercury, uranium, and other contaminants present in the soil, food chain, and human bodies of island residents due to U.S. military bases. Vieques residents have elevated rates of disease, including a 26.9% higher incidence of cancer than other Puerto Ricans. In Panama, the U.S. military left behind more than 100,000 pieces of unexploded ordnance on firing ranges in the fast-growing canal area, despite a Canal Treaty provision for removing such dangers. In Okinawa, Japan, environmentalists say the construction of two aircraft runways as part of a base relocation plan on will destroy the critical feeding grounds and habitat of the manatee-like dugong animal.

Coming back to the U.S. itself, another question is the cost of operating 800 – 1000 foreign military bases? Most U.S. taxpayers probably don't know they are paying around \$100 billion a year for the U.S. to operate all of these foreign bases, according to a 2016 report by The Economist. One must consider the astronomical cost while thinking how 12.2% of adults in the U.S. don't have healthcare, or how U.S. students face \$1.5 trillion in outstanding student loans. Just think of how all of this money that is going into war and the building of military infrastructure, when it could be used to better the lives of people in the United States.

### **No to U.S. Foreign Military Bases! No to NATO!**

The list goes on and on, but it is a global movement that is necessary to bring an end to U.S. military bases worldwide. On February 23, 2018, a Global Day of Action was called by the Coalition Against U.S. Foreign Military Bases. Actions were held around the world, including here in Vancouver, Canada. With the upcoming International Conference Against US/NATO Military Bases in Dublin, Ireland this will be an important chance for worldwide coordination and collaboration to build a strong, united and effective movement against the U.S. as well as NATO foreign military bases.

Worldwide action can and will shed light on the wide net of U.S. foreign military bases, and worldwide action will bring an end to these bases and an end to U.S. military adventurism around the world.

*Follow Janine Solanki on Twitter:  
@janinesolanki*



**Global Campaign Against US/NATO Military Bases**

**invites you to the**

**First International Conference  
Against US/NATO Military Bases**

**November 16-18, 2018, Dublin, Ireland**

The increasingly aggressive actions of US/NATO forces, the raging wars in the Middle East, the burgeoning arms race devastating the national treasuries, the bellicose language replacing diplomatic negotiations, the economic crises facing country after country, the destruction of the global environment through war and unfettered exploitation, their impact on public health, have created crises that, unless checked by popular opposition, can lead to unimaginable catastrophe and war.

None of us can stop this madness alone. Global peace forces must come together, mobilizing the millions in our countries, and around the world, for peace. Based on this understanding, we have initiated the Global Campaign Against US/NATO Military Bases.

**For updated information about the conference and to  
join the Global Campaign Against US/NATO Military Bases  
go to NoUSNATOBases.org**

# ONE STEP FORWARD TWO STEPS BACK

## HOW TRUDEAU IS BUYING TIME TO MANOEUVRE TOWARDS BUILDING TMX PIPELINE EXPANSION & LNG

*By Thomas Davies*

*"I think the biggest takeaway is the urgency. We're at a critical juncture. We really only have a few years to turn things around...If we do not tackle climate change, the damages would outweigh any losses that we have from addressing it."* - Kirsten Zickfeld, SFU associate geography and one of the lead authors of the recently released United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report 2018

It was strangely fitting that a professor at Simon Fraser University (SFU) was selected as a lead author of the massive new report on climate change and fossil fuels. SFU's campus sits on top of Burnaby Mountain, where the controversial Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion project would terminate after bringing Tar Sands bitumen oil from Alberta to the British Columbia coast to be exported. "The Mountain" has been ground zero of the fight against the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion for almost a decade now.

While IPCC Report is the most comprehensive explanation of the overall global urgency of climate change and fossil fuel expansion, Zickfeld also knows a thing or two about the possible devastating local impacts of fossil fuel pipelines. She and about 40,000 other students, faculty and staff, would be trapped in a gigantic fireball if there was ever an explosion at the pipeline tank farm facility – one which would be expanded if the proposed expansion was ever built.

Despite this, Zickfeld is pretty modest to focus almost entirely on these global effects above her own safety, emphasizing the large-scale fossil fuel projects like the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion do not fit in with what is necessary to ensure a livable planet, "As a country, we are approving pipelines to move fossil fuels. This is totally moving in the wrong direction."

**What's This Report? Why the Urgency?**

The IPCC report is comprehensive. It references over 6,000 scientific reports done by 91 authors and 133 contributing authors from over 40 countries. The report concludes that we have already seen the beginnings of the devastating impact of human-caused global warming from 1 degree Celsius with record-breaking storms, forest fires, droughts, coral bleaching, heat waves, and floods around the world – but this would get substantially worse with 1.5 degrees of warming and far worse at 2 degrees.

"Limiting warming to 1.5°C is possible within the laws of chemistry and physics but doing so would require unprecedented changes," said Jim Skea, Co-Chair of IPCC Working Group III. The scientists all agree: the solutions all require cutting fossil-fuel use in half in less than 15 years and eliminating their use almost entirely in 30 years.

### **Quashed - One Step Forward**

We saw an important victory against the pipeline expansion and in defence of the planet in August when Indigenous Nations and environmental groups won a Federal Appeals Court case which "quashed" the government approval of the Tar Sands pipeline project. The decision cited a flawed National Energy Board (NEB) review process which had not considered the marine impact of increased tanker traffic, and the government's failure to fulfil its constitutional requirement to "meaningfully consult" with Indigenous nations.

This was one high point in a decades-long struggle which has relied primarily on Indigenous nations-led grassroots organizing. Over \$600,000 was raised over two years through community

support for the legal challenge. Over 240 people have been arrested so far for blocking the gates to the Tank Farm where the expansion project was beginning to move forward. There have been constant actions across British Columbia with support across Canada and internationally. Tens of thousands have consistently taken to the streets in marches and rallies. While this hasn't terminated the pipeline project for good, it has succeeded in delaying the project by years and jeopardized construction. Texas oil giant Kinder Morgan, the original owner of the Trans Mountain Pipeline, demanded, and received, a government bailout because of the uncertainty.

While we celebrated, we knew it was only a matter of time before the government counter-punched. They had, after all, now bought the existing pipeline and expansion project for \$4.5 billion taxpayer dollars.

### **NEB – One Step Back**

It didn't take long for the government to announce that the National Energy Board (NEB) would do a marine impact specific review, and for that review to expose itself as a rubber stamping process. Here's a quick summary:

- The NEB review is limited to 22 weeks, and members of the public will have less than a week to apply for comment.
- The review is limited to marine impacts only 22 kilometres off the coast, rather than the 370 km requested by scientists especially given that oil tankers will travel though endangered Orca whale's habitat well beyond 22 kilometres.
- The NEB has arbitrarily said it will hold oral sessions starting in late November for Indigenous communities, but other interveners, regardless of relevant expertise or information, will only be able to submit written evidence.

"From the get-go, it looks like a political exercise, not an environmental one," said Misty MacDuffee, a conservation biologist at the Raincoast Conservation



Foundation in British Columbia.

"We're astounded at the new NEB process that is more flawed than the process we fought so hard against when it was Kinder Morgan's pipeline project," said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of BC Indian Chiefs. "It's disgusting, disgraceful and shameful."

In the end, this isn't surprising. While the NEB is technically "independent," it is made up primarily of appointed "former" oil, gas and mining executives, lobbyists and government bureaucrats. Take some time to read their biographies and you will see it is dominated by qualifications such as: "Alberta's Resource Person of the Year, 2011", "worked at Gaz Métro for over 29 years, serving 10 years in executive positions", "Senior Principal at Purvin & Gertz, an international energy-consulting firm (1998-2006; Calgary)", "Vice President, SNC Lavalin Capital".

Probably the most telling part of the corrupt nature of the NEB: it refuses to consider any evidence of the large climate change impacts of building the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion, despite the broad scientific consensus that this is a life or death issue for the planet.

### LNG – Another Step Back

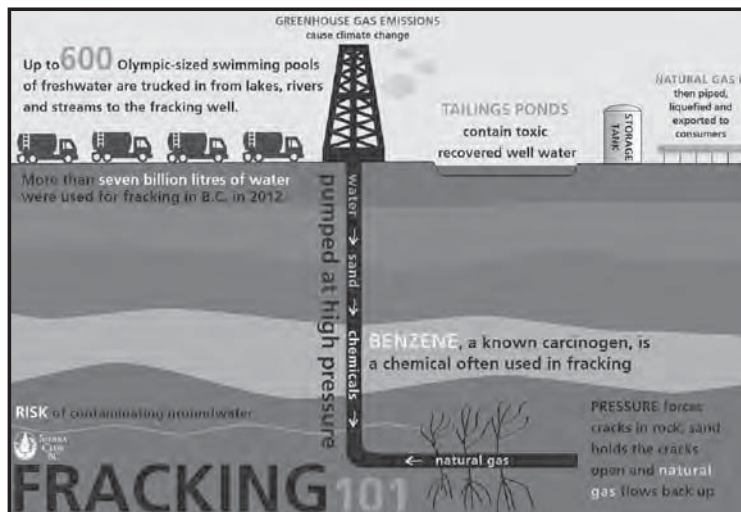
While the BC NDP were elected on a promise to oppose the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion, their recent approval of a 40 billion dollar LNG Canada liquefied natural-gas pipeline with a very similar climate impact has many scratching their heads at the hypocrisy. The LNG Canada project will see a pipeline carrying natural gas from Dawson Creek in northeastern B.C. to a new processing plant on the coast in Kitimat. There, the gas would be liquefied for overseas export.

"Today LNG Canada has sent a signal to the world that British Columbia and Canada are open for business," the BC Premier said. "I can't tell you how proud I am. I can't stop smiling."

At a technical briefing for media, a B.C. senior government official said the province's total financial incentives for

the project are at \$5.35 billion - including a break on the carbon tax, the elimination of the LNG income tax it previously supported and cheaper electricity rates than those set by the previous Liberal administration.

The NDP had previously committed to reducing provincial greenhouse gases by 40 percent by 2030 and 80 percent by 2050. They provided no information for how this LNG development could take place and still meet those commitments. It would require taking every gas-powered vehicle off the road to offset the new greenhouse gas emission.



Developing LNG is always controversial because, above and beyond the climate impacts of burning it as fuel, it is extracted by hydraulic fracturing or "fracking." Fracking injects significant amounts of high-pressure water, often mixed with chemicals, into the ground to force open existing fissures and extract oil or gas. This ruins water supplies and has been shown to induce earthquakes.

When asked how the province can justify supporting the LNG Canada project, given its huge carbon footprint, BC Premier Horgan justified the move saying, "BC is just 4.5 million people sharing a planet with seven billion others. We have to be realistic about what our impacts would be." This is the same type of side-stepping of responsibility used to justify Tar Sands Expansion and building the Trans Mountain pipeline!

This decision also came after global warming aggravated wildfires in BC have now burned more than 1.2 million hectares of the province, eight times more

than the 10-year-average.

Most indicting of the terrible hypocrisy involved in approving the LNG project: both LNG Canada and the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion have a similar overall greenhouse gas footprints during their lifetimes. 100 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent for LNG Canada and 120 million tonnes for Trans Mountain - when considering extraction, transportation, processing and burning in other nations after export.

In response to the LNG Canada decision, the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs whose traditional territories the pipeline would be built on, reaffirmed their opposition to the project. "The federal government talks about reconciliation, and they undermine their own words by trying to shove pipelines down our throat or industry down our throat," stated Dinī ze' Madeek, head chief of the Gitdumden Clan. "As we stated in 2006, there will be no pipeline to enter Wet'suwet'en territory." The Unitstot'en Camp built by Wet'suwet'en and supporters to stop pipeline construction on their territories also continues to grow and build permanent structures.

### Who Will Lead?

Once again those in Federal and Provincial government who claim to be leaders are not just asleep at the wheel, they've driven us off the cliff. While the fight against the TMX pipeline and now against LNG Canada haven't entirely stopped the projects - we now have a much better idea of who our real allies are and who they are not. Every step forward has been the result of consistent campaigning and mobilizing. This must be continued and expanded. The IPCC Report gives us 12 years to turn the situation around or face catastrophic consequences. Our lives and the planet depend on it, so let's organize like it.

**No TMX Pipeline Expansion! Not Now, Not Ever!**

**Stop LNG Canada!**

**Build Our Future, Not Pipelines!**

**System Change Not Climate Change!**

*Follow Thomas on Twitter: @thomasdavis59*

# THE FIGHT GOES ON!

>> JOIN CLIMATE CONVERGENCE COALITION

>> LET'S FIGHT WITH WORKING CLASS  
PRINCIPLES FOR MOTHER NATURE



Court Support rally outside Vancouver Courthouse.  
Oct. 29, 2018

*By Thomas Davies*

While the Federal government rolls out its rubber stamp responses to the Federal Court of Appeals “quashing” of their original approval of the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion, the Climate Convergence Coalition has continued to organize public actions to expose their dishonest manoeuvring and continue to keep the momentum going against the dirty Tar Sands mega-project.

On October 10, over 80 people met in front of Liberal Party MP Terry Beech's constituency office in Burnaby. Kinder Morgan's tank farm and marine loading facilities are part of Mr. Beech's constituency – and they were demanding he does more to stop the project which endangers the planet, and their neighbourhood very specifically. While the MP has said he was critical of the project, he's been especially silent since the government's \$4.5 billion bailout of the project. Organizers were there to demand he, “Do the Right Thing!”

Everyone rallied together outside of his office with signs and banners, waving to the busy rush hour traffic who honked as they went by. BROKE member Karl Perrin read letter or protest he had published in the Burnaby Now



Rally in front of MP Terry Beech's Office.  
Oct. 10, 2018

this climate disaster project built only shows that you are committed to neither. If you want to stand up for the people and planet, the tens of thousands of people who have actively been working to stop it will be with you. If you continue to try and ram it through, we will oppose you every step of the way. The choice is yours.” Organizers then marched inside and delivered the letter with news crews present.

In the end, Mr. Beech came out of his office to address the crowd, saying he had a new report on the Trans Mountain Pipeline on his website, but refusing to stay and discuss the issue in public. He and his staff were not happy to have the large presence outside his office as the Federal election campaign period nears.

Over 240 people have so far been arrested blocking Kinder Morgan's tank farm gates, and the court processes for all of them have been ongoing for months. People are facing higher, and higher fines and jail sentences for non-violently standing up against a project a Federal Court has ruled should not have been approved in the first place.

Many Climate Convergence organizers, including artist Marta

Robertson-Smyth, have been arrested. Marta was part of an artist's action against the pipeline which generated a lot of media attention. The coalition decided to organize a public Court Support Action as Marta and Pia Massie, another well known local artist, were entering the court to begin their trial.

“You and the Liberal Party were elected to a majority government on a stated commitment to Indigenous Rights and Climate Leadership. Continuing to do everything possible to get

With a backdrop of supporters holding hand-painted children saying “Speak for Us,” both Pia and Marta addressed the crowd and the press with their motivations for taking action.

Undeterred by a torrential downpour, Marta emphasized, “As we blunder towards economic and ecological disaster our politicians continue to make devil's bargains with international corporations that are putting the planet at risk... We each have the power to help fix things. And we can find a way. What is an ocean but a multitude of drops?”

It becomes more obvious every day that the Trudeau government has decided to build the Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion – regardless of the environmental, financial or social costs. This puts them at odds with previous commitments they've made to respect both Indigenous rights and the environment. As well, puts them at odds with

Delivering protest letters to MP Terry Beech's Office. Oct. 10, 2018



hundreds of thousands of people opposed to building the pipeline and doubling down on Tar Sands production. Climate Convergence Coalition will continue to expose and oppose this dangerous and unnecessary project and articulate our vision for a sustainable future.

No Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion!

Build Our Future, Not a Pipeline!

Follow Climate Convergence on Twitter:  
@Climate604

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## Battle of Ideas Press

Upcoming Book Release

**SYSTEM CHANGE  
NOT CLIMATE CHANGE**

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**By Thomas Davies**

Thomas Davies is a social and environmental justice organizer based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the Fire This Time Newspaper and a founding member of Climate Convergence Metro-Vancouver.





# END THE U.S. BLOCKADE ON CUBA! THE WORLD OVERWHELMINGLY CONDEMNS THE U.S. BLOCKADE ON CUBA



*By Tamara Hansen*

Every month – across Canada in Vancouver, Ottawa, and Montreal, as well as around the world in New York and Kiev, Ukraine – Cuba solidarity activists, organizers, and supporters are demanding an end to the cruel and unjust U.S. blockade on Cuba. In Vancouver, Friends Against the U.S. Blockade – Vancouver (FCAB-Vancouver), with the support of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) join in front of the U.S. consulate to hear speakers, to picket, and to engage with passersby.

At least once a month, someone passing by will ask, “End the U.S. blockade on Cuba?! ... But didn’t President Obama do that?!”

The short answer is no.

The fact that the blockade continues full force against the Cuban people is recognized in an annual vote at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). For the past 27 years in a row, the United States government has been summarily condemned by the International community when it votes alongside Cuba in favour of the UNGA resolution on “Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.”

On October 31, 2018, United States Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley tweeted, “RT @USUN: Every year Cuba puts forth a resolution that blames Cuba’s poverty, repression, and lack of freedom on the United States. Tomorrow the UN will hear what we have to say about that and countries will have to vote between Cuba or the US. Who will vote with us?” With her tweet on October 31, the day before the annual vote, it seemed Ambassador Haley was preparing to lose yet again at the United Nations General Assembly.

Also contradictory in Ambassador Haley’s tweet – if the Cuban government is exaggerating the challenges they face due to the blockade (as she claims) why not end the blockade tomorrow?

| Votación histórica<br>contra el Bloqueo |         |           |
|---|---------|-----------|
|   | A FAVOR | EN CONTRA |
| 1992                                    | 59      | 3         |
| 1993                                    | 88      | 4         |
| 1994                                    | 101     | 2         |
| 1995                                    | 117     | 3         |
| 1996                                    | 137     | 3         |
| 1997                                    | 143     | 3         |
| 1998                                    | 157     | 2         |
| 1999                                    | 155     | 2         |
| 2000                                    | 167     | 3         |
| 2001                                    | 167     | 3         |
| 2002                                    | 173     | 3         |
| 2003                                    | 173     | 3         |
| 2004                                    | 179     | 4         |
| 2005                                    | 182     | 4         |
| 2006                                    | 186     | 4         |
| 2007                                    | 184     | 4         |
| 2008                                    | 185     | 3         |
| 2009                                    | 187     | 3         |
| 2010                                    | 187     | 2         |
| 2011                                    | 186     | 2         |
| 2012                                    | 188     | 3         |
| 2013                                    | 188     | 2         |
| 2014                                    | 188     | 2         |
| 2015                                    | 191     | 2         |
| 2016                                    | 191     | 0         |
| 2017                                    | 191     | 2         |

**+ 2018**  
**189 IN FAVOR**  
**2 AGAINST**

question, vote with us?” when 189 countries voted against the U.S. government and in favour of Cuba’s resolution to end the blockade. Who voted with Nikki Haley? Only the government of Israel – securing another landslide victory for the Cuban government and Cuban people!

**A Brief History of the U.S. Blockade on Cuba**

After the triumph of the Cuban revolution on January 1, 1959, the U.S. government imposed a series of sanctions on Cuba. A full trade embargo (or blockade) was announced by Democratic President John F. Kennedy on February 3, and formally established on February 7, 1962. The U.S. government claims these sanctions are meant to punish the revolutionary government of Cuba, not the Cuban people. However, over 55 years under this unjust and cruel U.S. policy has demonstrated that these sanctions are hurting all sectors of Cuban society: cutting access to medicines, school supplies, construction materials, and the list goes on. There is also strong evidence that the blockade hurts people living in the United States: imposing travel restrictions, international legal/financial penalties on U.S. companies, the sale of Cuban medicines to the United States, etc.

Of course, the blockade is only one element in the U.S. government’s campaign against Cuba and its revolutionary people and government.

First, the U.S. military has continually occupied the sovereign Cuban territory of Guantanamo Bay with their criminal naval base since 1903. Within this U.S. naval base is their infamous torture prison camp opened during the U.S. government’s so-called “war on terror” in 2002. According to CNN, the U.S. Defense Department spent approximately \$445 million to run the Guantanamo base in 2015. According to a May 2018 U.S. Department of Defence press release, 40 detainees from the war on terror remain at the Guantanamo base. Due to this expensive and illegal U.S. naval base and prison camp, the name “Guantanamo” remains synonymous worldwide with illegal detentions, hunger strikes, force-feeding by tubes, water-boarding, torture, violations of human rights, lack of access to due legal process, and the hypocrisy of the U.S. “war on terror”. The territory on which the Guantanamo naval base sits, clearly belongs to the island of Cuba- so why does the U.S. government continue to occupy it illegally? Would the U.S. allow the Cuban government to have a Cuban military base in Florida or somewhere else in the United States?



Secondly, the U.S. government also invests millions of dollars every year into destabilizing regime-change campaigns in Cuba – what the U.S. government officially refers to as “democracy-building” projects. American taxpayers help the U.S. government finance these made-in-America propaganda campaigns with so-called news outlets like “Radio Marti” and “TV Marti,” as well as other bogus programs run by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the National Endowment for Democracy (NED).

### President Trump & the U.S. Blockade on Cuba

The need to continue pushing against the U.S. blockade and other U.S. aggression against Cuba has been clear due to the Trump Administration’s numerous attacks on Cuba. Most recently, the Trump administration organized a publicity stunt at the United Nations just weeks ahead on the annual vote on the blockade.

On October 16, U.S. government officials used the U.N.’s Economic and Social Council chamber to host a forum titled, “Jailed for What? The plight of Cuba’s political prisoners.” According to the Digital Journal, “Cuba had formally protested the meeting, sending a letter to UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres requesting that the event is cancelled because it was in violation of UN rules about the use of its premises. UN rules are vague and specify only that meetings and events held on UN premises must be “consistent with the purposes and principles of the United Nations” and be non-commercial.”

Cuban and Bolivian delegates attended the meeting and banged desks loudly as U.S. Ambassador Kelley Currie (an alternate representative to the UNGA) attempted to give her opening remarks to the event. Throughout the event, Cubans and Bolivians peacefully shouted “Cuba Si! Bloqueo No!” (Cuba Yes! Blockade No!) and sang Cuba’s national anthem in protest of the event.

U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Nikki Haley wrote a ludicrous letter of protest to the U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres after the event which was published by Fox News. She explains that the U.S. government event about Cuba was disrupted by what she deems a “mob scene,” however she acknowledges that Cuban and Bolivian representatives banged



Above: Students at Cuba’s Ciudad Universitaria José Antonio Echeverría (CUJAE) take “selfies against the blockade”, October 2018. Below: Cubans protest the launch of a U.S. “Jailed for what?” campaign at the United Nations on October 16, 2018



desks loudly to disrupt their event. Haley also claims that there was so much damage done (to the desks) that the U.S. was asked to pay for repairs – of course, she produces no evidence of this – then claiming she was later told it would come out of the U.N. budget. Ambassador Haley further reminds Secretary General Guterres, “The United States pays 22% of the regular UN budget. That means the U.S. would pay 22% of this cost. That is completely unacceptable.” Holding U.S. funding of the U.N. over Guterres’ head demonstrates that the U.S. believes that its financial contributions to the United Nations

give it special privileges and rights to throw their weight around. This is a favourite tactic of the Trump administration in many of the international institutions in which the U.S. government participates. Fox News published two photos for the hilarious “evidence” against the Cuban and Bolivian delegates, two slightly blurry pictures of slightly scratched desktops, with minor damage which could obviously have happened at any time from regular use.

In an article for Granma International News, Cuban journalist Daina Caballero Trujillo explained Cuba’s perspective on the U.S. organized event. She writes, “What the United States attempted appeared almost a comedy. How dare the U.S. government speak of human rights violations when it commits torture in jails like those in Iraq or Guantánamo? When it forcefully separates children from their immigrant parents; when it encourages the use of guns, which have taken the lives of many adolescents in its own schools. Washington is running out of pretexts, and what happened October 16 in the UN was a sign of its desperation, its lack of arguments. The U.S. knows that the biggest and most flagrant violation of human rights is the blockade, which it imposes on Cubans. It should not attempt to divert attention, to go from the accused to the accuser. It has not managed to defeat Cuba with the blockade, nor with its threats, lies, or defamatory campaigns.”

### The World Stands United Against the U.S. Blockade on Cuba

Despite the U.S. government’s best efforts: from Ambassador Haley’s tweets to Ambassador Kelley Currie’s speech, to over 55 years of blockade on Cuba – the Trump administration and previous U.S. administrations have all failed to turn the tide at the United Nations General Assembly against the Cuban government and Cuban people.

For the 27<sup>th</sup> year in a row, the world community stood together to condemn the United States unjust and cruel blockade on the people of Cuba, with 189 voting in favour of ending the U.S. blockade on Cuba. Once again in voting against the resolution to end the blockade, the United States and Israel stood on the wrong side of history. The world continues to stand united echoing Cuba’s demand, “¡Cuba Si! ¡Bloqueo No!”

Follow Tamara on Twitter: @THans01

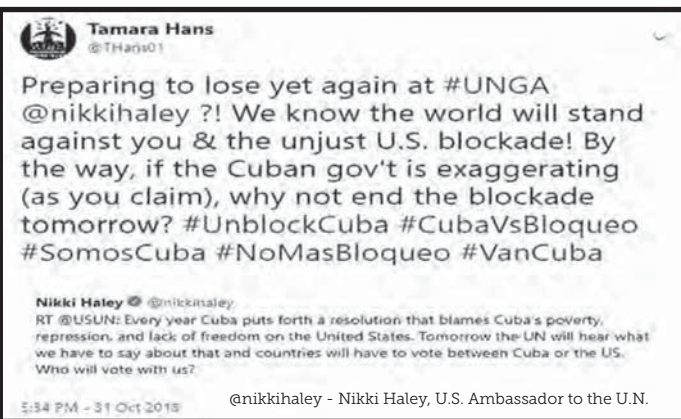




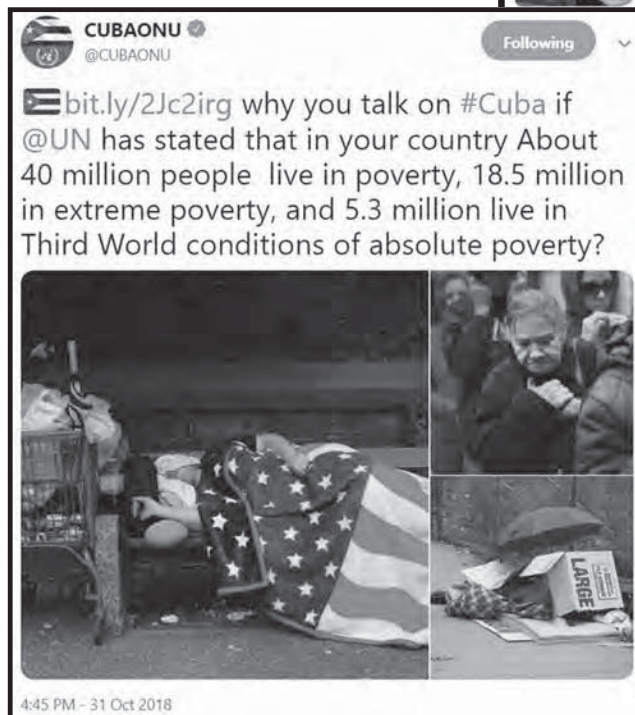
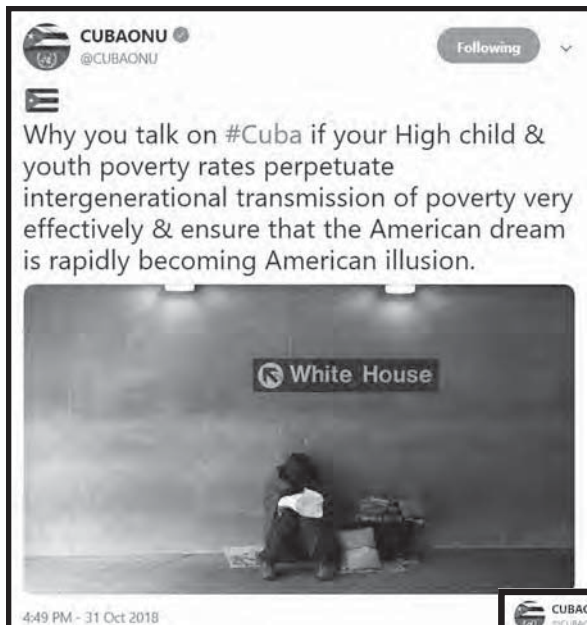
On October 31 & November 1, 2018 Cuba called for a "Twitter Storm" or "Tuitazo" against the U.S. Blockade on Cuba.

Using the hashtags #NoMasBloqueo #UnBlockCuba #SomosCuba individuals, organizations & institutions around the world tweeted ahead of the United Nations General Assembly vote.

Here are some of our favourite contributions!









# SUPPORT POSTAL WORKERS ON STRIKE!

**MILITANT POSTAL WORKERS IN DEFENCE OF WORKERS RIGHTS!**

**SUPPORT POSTAL WORKERS AND CUPW STRIKE AGAINST CANADA POST!**

*By Thomas Davies*

*Devin Piper is a letter carrier, member and shop steward of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), Local 739 in the Fraser Valley, British Columbia.*

*Devin and over 50,000 more Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) members voted approximately 95% in favour of strike action in late September, after months of getting nowhere while bargaining with Canada Post. Since then the union has implemented rotating strikes involving thousands of workers and instituted an overtime ban.*

*What CUPW members are fighting for is what all workers deserve – livable wages, safe working conditions and stable, full-time jobs. What Canada Post is fighting for is what all corporations fight for – more work for less pay, fewer benefits or no benefits. They do this by imposing longer mail routes, paying rural workers less than urban workers, and demanding the right to hire unlimited amounts of temporary employees who would not receive regular pay, benefits or overtime and would be out of a job the moment the company didn't want them anymore.*

*Fire This Time supports the CUPW workers 100% in their fight for a fair contract. It is essential that all workers stand together to defend our common interests. The rise of temporary and precarious employment is having devastating effects on all workers, union and non-union, and their families and communities. The CUPW strike is an*



**Top to bottom:** Devin Piper & his fellow Postal Workers on strike in Fraser Valley West on October 29, 2018; Postal workers on Strike in Regina, SK; Canada Post mail box

*important fightback against this, and in defence of all worker's rights.*

*Below is an interview with Devin, on what he thinks about the ongoing strike.*

**FTT:** What do you think are the most important issues being fought for between CUPW and Canada Post?

Wage Equality is a major one this time around. Health and Safety – we have five times the injury rate in the Federal sector, and we have the second highest

injury rate in the Federal sector behind longshoremen. That ties into the third issue, which is Overburdening. The routes are just too long, and that's because of parcels. That's where there's been a lot of growth, in parcels, and they're not giving us enough time to do them. So we're still expected to do the mail, and then they're just piling parcels on top of us, on top of the mail. They're basically saying, "You guys are going to the house with the mail anyways, just deliver a parcel while you go." They give us some time for parcels, but it's completely inadequate. So we're rushing. We're doing overtime like crazy.

Every Monday we're expected to do overtime, and that leads into the next point: Staffing. They use overtime to staff way too much. We're trying to create more full time, straight hour, jobs. Forced overtime is a

big issue in a lot of smaller depots where they don't have a lot of people. We can get forced into overtime and they rely on that as a staffing tool, which they're not supposed to. We believe in the service, so





we'll take that obligation, but they also must staff the job properly.

**FTT: When you said "Wage Equality" - what did you mean by that?**

In 2011 we had a five-year pay scale, where you would start at the bottom wage and take five years to get to the top. The gap was about \$2, and you would start going up those increments immediately whether you were a "permanent" or "casual" employee. Now we have a seven-year scale that starts even lower, and you don't even start climbing that scale until you become a permanent employee. So the main issue is that people are being kept as casual employees for longer periods of time, some even for five years, and when they finally become permanent employees, they have seven more years to make it to the top wage. It could take 12 years to get there, and that's ridiculous. Now you have people doing the exactly the same job, but one person is making seven dollars more an hour.

Justin Trudeau has completely failed us. A lot of what this round of negotiations is about getting back some of the things we lost under the pressure of Stephen Harper-era legislation which was later found to be illegal.

**FTT: You've been part of the ongoing CUPW rotating strikes. How would you describe the mood on the picket lines?**

Spirited. We were having fun. We picketed in the rain. It was really empowering. I got to tell a manager, "You're not going into our depot unless you pay my co-worker for her special leave that you denied. We need a commitment right now." He thought I was joking, and I was like, "No. I'm serious. This is a picket line, and I'm not going to allow you to enter unless you agree to pay this leave you've denied." So he agreed to pay it, and it was very empowering.

I know in our depot, a lot of the members are actually asking for more. We did a petition in our depot to call on our National Executive to do an all-out strike. So, when we got to go out even for one day it was pretty cool.

**FTT: That leads me into my next question, what do you hope to see next?**

Well, I hope to see an agreement. I'd like to see Canada Post seriously negotiate. We demanded substantial wage increases - which means above inflation. We haven't gotten an above-inflation wage increase in at least a decade, probably more. We took 0% in 2015 for God's sake. ZERO PERCENT. So they came to us with 1.5% per year for four years, and we countered at 3.5%, and they countered back with no wage increase, but a minor improvement in how you move up the pay scale. So I want to see Canada Post come back with a proposal that's above inflation.

There's also a very specific issue that is called the "two bundles" system. We used to carry our mail in one hand, and you had one bundle of mail. Then they introduced these machines which sort the standard letters, and we sort the larger items like magazines by hand. They don't give us time to merge those two products. So what ends up happening on our route is that we carry the standard letters in one hand, and they expect us to carry the large stuff on our forearm. That's leading to so many injuries. That's leading to so much mail getting dropped. It was something that was dreamed up in a glass tower in

Ottawa, but on the street, it's completely impractical. It would be such an easy fix to get rid of - it would take us 10 minutes in the morning to merge those together but that ten minutes could mean one or two more jobs, and apparently they can't have that. We need to see an agreement that gets rid of that system and gives us a decent wage increase.

**FTT: And if the company is not willing to negotiate?**

We need to go all out. At some point, we need to go all out. We're rotating right now, and the company is still not negotiating. They have a special mediator, and we've gotten word from our union that the major issues, like the ones I've been talking about, they haven't even touched on them at all. Canada Post is not going to budge on these issues unless they are forced to. I don't know if rotating strikes can force them to because they continue to operate still. It's true that we're still getting paid, but then so do they. At some point, we need a nationwide mass strike, and we need to do it before they lock us out, so we can seize the initiative.

**FTT: Thanks for the interview, Devin. See you on the picket line!**

*Follow Thomas on Twitter: @thomasdavies59*



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At the beginning of October 2018 an estimated 4,000-7,000 people, the majority from the Central American country of Honduras, set off on a march North from San Pedro Sula, Honduras in search of somewhere to be safe. For some, their destination, one of the Southernmost border crossings in the United States, was over 2500km away.

Although the mainstream media has repeated it over and over, this march of seeking humanity it is not a "Migrant Caravan," a term that conveys too much joy and understatement— it is a dangerous and desperate journey. People are leaving everything that they have known, taking almost nothing with them, and risking it all because they feel like they have nothing left to lose.

"I left my country because of the poverty, because of the misery. My husband was killed in front of me when I was pregnant. I have five children; I am a single mother. There are no jobs. I am a woman over thirty; there are no jobs for me, there is discrimination. We want to give a better life to our children." - Oberlina Melendez, speaking from the march of migrants in Tapachula, Chiapas, Mexico (El Pais newspaper -Spain).

"There isn't work or anything. You can't live in Honduras. There isn't money," she said. "There's no help from the government. There's nothing," said Jennifer Paola López, 16 told New York Times.

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates, at least 2,300 people in the march are children. As the group continues North, the number of people joining changes. Some people are injured or get sick, and decide to turn back; others join. By the last week of October, the UN Refugee Agency reported that 1,500 people had made asylum claims in Mexico.

Choosing to move together as a group, is a form of protection against harassment by police and criminal gangs. There is more than enough reasons for this. The Guardian newspaper (England) reported that "80% of the women and girls who cross Mexico to get to the US border are raped on the way. The situation is so common that most of them take contraceptive precautions as they begin the journey north." Various sources estimate that in the last 12 years 120,000 immigrants

and refugees have disappeared as they travel through Mexico – that represents 10,000 people per year.

### **Who are the Immigrants and Refugees Coming to the U.S.?**

No, Mr. Trump, these refugees and immigrants, and the ones that have come before, and will come after, are not an "invasion." Even if every person that is on the march North made it up the U.S., it would only represent a small fraction of the 350-

groups in Honduras, financed by Venezuela, and sent north to challenge our sovereignty and challenge our border," as Vice President Pence said to the Washington Post.

People who are marching are mechanics, construction workers, farm workers, peasants, single-mothers, families; poor, working and oppressed people who are fleeing insecurity, brutal violence and extreme poverty. Immigrants and refugees that travel by foot, train and car over thousands of kilometres to the U.S./Mexico border are people that have seen their lives torn apart by capitalism and imperialism disorder.

In fiscal year 2018, 56% of the people that were detained at the U.S./Mexico border were from Central America (U.S. Department of Homeland Security). In 2010 migrants from Central America only represented 10% - a clear sign of a deepening economic, social and political crisis facing people in what is known as the "Northern Triangle," Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala.

### **Imperialism is the Elephant in the Room**

Migrants from Central America are escaping through a social fabric that has been ripped to shreds by hundreds of years of foreign intervention, exploitation, and colonialization. This is the elephant in the room that imperialist governments and their media mouthpieces are ignoring throughout this current crisis that is being manufactured at the U.S./Mexico border. The U.S. is culpable for this crisis, and it is only natural that immigrants and refugees are coming back to the centre that caused problems for them, straight to the belly of the beast.

In their struggle to maintain hegemony throughout Central America, the U.S. government and their imperialist allies have sewn poverty, corruption and destruction.

Today, the poverty rate in the Northern Triangle is 60% (World Bank 2017). The United Nations

World Food Program reports that nearly 50% of people in Guatemala are undernourished and in Honduras, 23% of children under the age of five are experiencing stunted growth. The murder rate in El Salvador is 60/100,000 people, one of the highest in the world (by comparison this rate is 6/100,000 in the United States). Today, Honduras and El Salvador are not war zones, but they are not far from. Both are ranked among the top five deadliest places that are not war-zones in the



400,000 people that are apprehended at the U.S./Mexico border each year (U.S. Border Patrol statistics).

And again, no, migrants are not being funded by "Honduran politicians allied with Venezuelan & Cuban socialist dictators are encouraging the caravan to undermine US-friendly gov't of Hernandez," as the US Ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, claimed. Nor was it "organized by leftist





**Left: A march of more than 1,500 Honduran refugees moves north from Honduras into Guatemala on October 15, 2018. Right: Nikki Haley, U.S. Ambassador to the UN sends fear-mongering tweets about the migrants on October 23, 2018.**

world by the Small Arms Survey – NGO.

Listening to U.S. President Trump, or anyone from the U.S. government for that matter would have you believe that violent gangs and corrupt government and military are to blame for the crisis that these countries face – and that is true, gangs and corruption are both important factors. However, what is the root of these conditions?

Since 1890, the U.S. government has led at least 31 military invasions of countries in Central America. Including three into Guatemala, two into El Salvador, eight into Honduras, eight into Nicaragua, nine into Panama and one into Costa Rica. These invasions brought with them not only soldiers and in some cases permanent U.S. military bases, but also the transnational companies that exploited the people and resources of Latin America.

One of the most recent interventions by the U.S. government against a country in the Northern Triangle was the 2009 U.S.-backed a coup d'état, against democratically elected President Manuel Zelaya in Honduras. Under President Zelaya, Hondurans were beginning to get more integrated into the social and political life of the country, and Honduras had joined ALBA (the Bolivarian Alliance of the Americas, which works to build Latin American trade and unity free from the United States and Canada). Since the coup d'état, which was overseen by U.S. President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and installation of a right-wing, U.S.-allied government, instability, government repression, corruption, poverty and violence have all escalated.

The U.S. government also has a history of brutality against the people of El Salvador and Guatemala. Throughout the 1980's

and early 1990's the U.S. government and their imperialist allies backed counter-revolutionary death squads and brutal governments in Nicaragua and El Salvador. Between 1960-1996 over 200,000 Guatemalans were murdered or forcibly disappeared, of which 83% were Indigenous Maya people (United Nations, called the Historical Clarification Commission) after a CIA –sponsored coup d'état in 1954 that installed a military dictatorship that brought about 40 years war.

There is also the continuous U.S. government support for paramilitaries and repressive governments and militaries throughout Latin America; including training, direct funding and through sales or weapons and military equipment. One of the ways that this militarization has been carried out is through U.S.-led interventions carried in the name of fighting the so-called war on drugs.

And what about the MS-13 gang that anyone watching mainstream media has heard so much about? That gang was formed in the United States prison system and was brought to Honduras and El Salvador through massive deportation programs in the U.S. that sent criminals born in Central America, but raised in the U.S., back to countries many of them had never seen since they were small children. Thus, gang violence too was brought down on the people of Central America via the U.S. government.

### **Scapegoating Immigrants and Refugees**

At the same time as U.S. President Trump whips up racism against migrants marching towards the U.S. looking for a better life, he is also repeating the so-called successes of the U.S. economy, especially pointing to a low unemployment rate.

However, this is a complete deception.

Even if people in the U.S. are employed, they are underemployed, or working multiple low-wage jobs to make ends meet – and blaming this on immigrants and refugees won't solve the basic problem that capitalism in the U.S. is failing to provide workers and oppressed people with one of the most basic of needs – a decent job.

The Pew Research Centre (U.S.), reported in August 2018 that “despite some ups and downs over the past several decades, today's real average wage (that is, the wage after accounting for inflation) has about the same purchasing power it did 40

years ago. And what wage gains there have been have mostly flowed to the highest-paid tier of workers” and “In fact, in real terms average hourly earnings peaked more than 45 years ago: The \$4-an-hour rate recorded in January 1973 had the same purchasing power that \$23 would be today.”

On top of this, there are at least 8 million people in the U.S. working more than one job, “The number of Americans working multiple jobs is at a 20-year high, while underemployment remains above pre-recession levels.” (New York Magazine)

No wonder the U.S. government needs someone to blame for this crisis.

Part of the scapegoating of immigrants and refugees is the fear campaign that goes along with it. This includes spreading the lie that immigrants and refugees commit more crimes than people born in the U.S. In fact, the ten U.S. cities with the largest growth of immigrant populations had lower levels of crime in 2016 than in 1980 (The Marshall Project study), and multiple studies have disproven any link between immigration and crime.

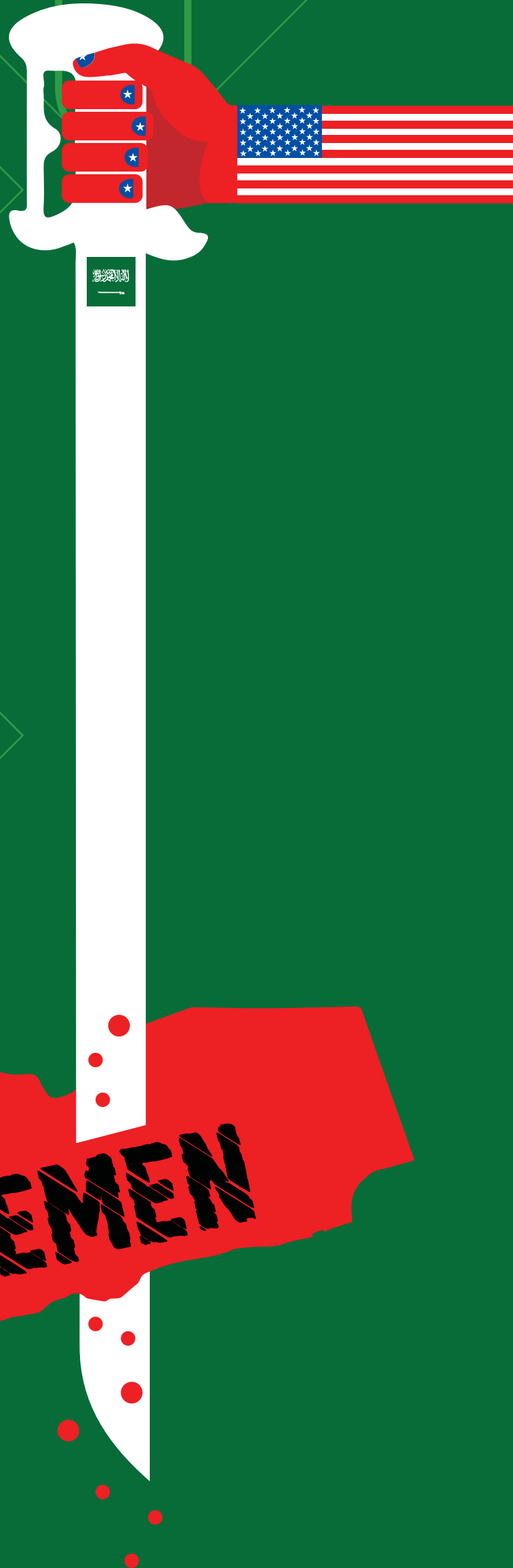
The U.S. government can then take advantage of the confusion and division resulting from scare tactics and fear-mongering like this to attack democratic and civil rights of people to be able to control opposition and any movement against capitalist disorder.

### **E.U. Brutality Against Immigrants and Refugees Continues**

Hundreds of thousands of people continue to risk their lives on rickety ships through the deadly Mediterranean Sea fleeing war, occupation and economic devastation in

*continued on page 30*

**STOP THE  
U.S./SAUDI/UAE  
AGGRESSION  
AND KILLINGS  
IN YEMEN NOW!**







## TRUDEAU'S "JEEP"

*The closest thing to an actual Jeep in Canada's military inventory is the G Wagon, a Mercedes-Benz G-Class vehicle — a far cry from the LAV III that a Canadian company is selling to Saudi Arabia. During the election campaign, Justin Trudeau said the Liberals would not block the \$10 billion contract because the vehicles were "Jeeps."*

76-mm grenade launcher  
25 mm cannon

5.56 or 7.62-mm top-turret-mounted machine gun

Weight: 1,500 kg  
Length: 4.15 m  
Height: 2.01 m

**LAV III**  
LIGHT ARMOURD VEHICLE

Weight: 19,950 kg  
Length: 6.98 m  
Height: 2.69 m

Speed: Up to 100 km/h  
Personnel: 3  
Passengers: 7

**G WAGON**  
LIGHT UTILITY VEHICLE WHEELED (LUVV)

Weight: 1,500 kg  
Length: 4.15 m  
Height: 2.01 m

Speed: Up to 138 km/h  
Personnel: 2  
Passengers: 0

SOURCE: CANADIAN MILITARY; MERCEDES-BENZ; LAV III: CRESTECH/CHRYSLER

(TRUDEAU'S PERSONS, SEVERAL TIMES)

**STOP  
THE U.S./  
SAUDI/UAE/  
AGGRESSION  
& KILLINGS IN  
YEMEN**

“We deplore the ongoing violence, which has led to mass malnourishment, severe food insecurity, death and the world’s largest humanitarian crisis. Since the beginning of the conflict in 2015, Canada has provided \$130 million of life-saving humanitarian aid to affected communities... We join the call from allies in urging the international community to stand united in demanding a swift end to the violence.”

What the statement intentionally fails to mention is that Canada has exported over \$735 million of military goods to Saudi Arabia in between 2015-2017 according to Canada's annual "Report on the Export of Military Goods." To put this number in context, 2015 was the start of the Saudi-led coalition war on Yemen. Since then Canada's military export to Saudi Arabia has increased annually.

As CTV reported: “In 2017, the [Saudi] kingdom accounted for 48 percent of Canada’s military goods and technology exports, outside the U.S. The next closest trade partner was the United Kingdom, at just over 8 percent.”

People in Yemen continue to face daily bombing and aggressions by the Saudi-led coalition. Also, Saudi Arabia has imposed an air, land and sea blockade on the country, further destabilizing the local economy and creating shortages in food, medicine and all life essentials.

The United Nations has classified the situation in Yemen as “the world’s worst humanitarian crisis” with “75% of the population, 22 million people, need some form of humanitarian assistance and protection.”

## Is Canada Really Concerned?

Don't let the Canadian government's rhetoric of "human rights champion" fool you. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Minister of Foreign Affairs Chrystia Freeland might want you to believe that they care about the well-being of the people of Yemen, but as CBC online columnist Neil Macdonald wrote: "Let's not kid ourselves, Canada is in the war business."

This was how Sherin Varkey, deputy representative of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Yemen described the current humanitarian situation in the country. Over three years of the horrific bombing of Yemen by the Saudi-led coalition has devastated the already impoverished country; more than 56,000 people were killed, not including those who lost their lives due to famine or disease. The Saudi bombing has destroyed schools, hospitals, homes, factories, markets, water and sanitation systems, and other vital civilian infrastructure. Despite all of these atrocities, the war on Yemen hasn't been a focus of the conscious of the world to oppose and stop this madness. However, today, the tide is turning. Many around the world are becoming aware of the atrocities committed by the U.S., Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to destroy Yemen for

*By Azza Rojbi*

The Liberal government has also approved a \$15 billion deal to supply Saudi Arabia with light-armoured vehicles (LAV) equipped with heavy guns and cannon, which Trudeau referred to as “jeeps.”

In a more recent attempt to justify this arms deal with Saudi Arabia, especially as the opposition to the deal continues to grow in Canada, Trudeau said:

“The contract signed by the previous government ... makes it very difficult to suspend or leave that contract,” and “I do not want to leave Canadians holding a billion-dollar bill because we’re trying to move forward on doing the right thing.”

S o m e h o w  
Trudeau is  
trying to  
convince us  
that he can’t  
do “the right  
thing” because  
he claims  
cancelling the  
deal would cost  
a billion-dollars  
and he doesn’t  
want to leave  
taxpayers with  
the bill. It seems  
Trudeau forgot  
the \$4.5billion  
his government  
wasted to buy  
the hugely  
unpopular and disastrous Kinder Morgan  
pipeline and billions more it will spend  
if the Trans Mountain expansion project  
moves forward. It looks like Trudeau has  
a track record for doing the wrong thing!

### **How Concerned is the U.S. Government About Yemen?**

Since day one, the United States government has been providing political, logistical and military support to the Saudi-led coalition’s war on Yemen. U.S. military airplanes are flying over Yemen providing intelligence gathering and refuelling the Saudi-led coalition warplanes. Also, the United States has continued and increased its weapons sales to Saudi Arabia, UAE and other states part of the military coalition.

Despite their direct implication in the war, the U.S. government claims to be concerned about the loss of life and destruction in Yemen. While speaking about the situation in Yemen on October 30, 2018 U.S. Defense Secretary James

Mattis said, “Thirty days from now we want to see everybody around a peace table based on a ceasefire.” Later, on that same day, Secretary of State Pompeo said, “The United States calls on all parties to support UN Special Envoy Martin Griffiths in finding a peaceful solution to the conflict in Yemen.”

Their words are meaningless! These two U.S. officials claim to want an end to the war and killings in Yemen while at the same time the U.S. military continues to refuel Saudi-led coalition fighter jets currently bombing the country. If the United States truly cared about the people of Yemen it would not need 30

coming negotiations.

### **Role of EU on the Ground**

Several European countries joined the United States in its public relations stunt calling for a ceasefire and an end to the war in Yemen. Most of these countries, including the UK, France, Spain and Germany, have been making billions in weapons sales to the Saudi Kingdom and UAE.

In 2017, France sold \$1.7 billion worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia, while the UK exported at least \$1.4 billion of arms and military equipment to the kingdom. Both countries have also provided logistical,

training and military support to Saudi and Emirati forces. According to Sky News, U.S. and British military experts are working a l o n g s i d e Saudi military officers in their Air Operation C o m m a n d Centre. France is also present on the ground as the French newspaper Le Figaro reported

that French special forces are assisting UAE forces fighting in Yemen.

### **Are Imperialists Really Having a Change of Heart?**

With all this big new fuss by imperialist countries and their mainstream media about creating a ceasefire in Yemen, it is not as if they have suddenly been touched by the dire situation of the Yemeni people or they have just suddenly become champions of the self-determination for Yemen. For over three years, these countries have been accomplices to all the atrocities committed by their puppets - the Saudi government and its allies. This is just their new deceptive tactic to win some time for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen in the hope that it will change the balance of forces in their favour in the country, and to appease the worldwide growing opposition to the war. Despite having all this military support and weaponry, the U.S., Saudi Arabia and their allies have failed to win or crush the

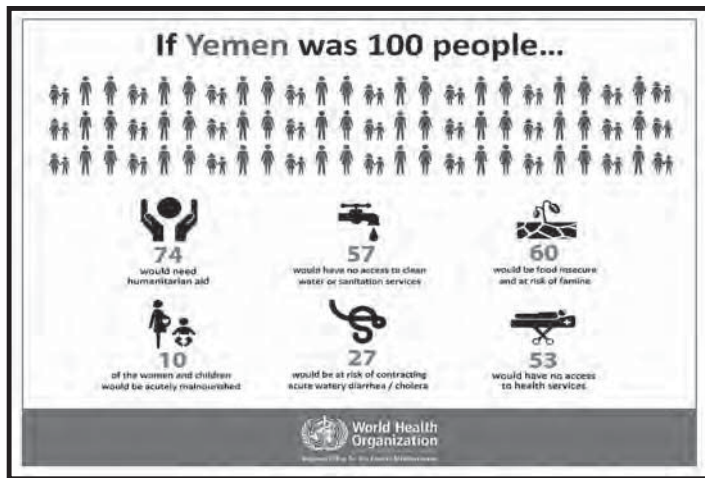


Yemeni children present documents to receive food rations in Sana'a, Yemen, April 2018.

days to end the bombing and destruction; it is a matter of only one day to end the massacres if the U.S. stops its political, logistical and military support of the war.

These statements about a ceasefire are only an attempt to buy them time as they manoeuvre under the pressure of worldwide public opinion which is increasingly opposed to the war and horrors committed by Saudi Arabia against the Yemeni people. A day after Washington’s statements for a ceasefire in Yemen, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates deployed 30,000 troops near Yemen’s port city of Hodeidah. This is in no way a sign towards a ceasefire or a peaceful resolution. The Saudi-led coalition is ramping up its siege of Hodeidah and preparing for an assault to gain control over the city, which is the key entry point to Yemen’s imports and international aid. As well, with taking over Hodeidah, the U.S. and Saudi coalition will have the upper-hand and political and strategical advantage in the





resistance and bravery of the Yemeni people. Now they have to find a new way to continue their destruction and create divisions to split Yemen and prevent it from healing, uniting and rebuilding from this horrendous war.

In an interview with the Guardian newspaper, a former head of air force operations at King Abdulaziz airbase in Saudi Arabia, who defected from the Saudi armed forces, said: “This is a war against the Yemeni nation and against Yemen becoming independent.”

Saudi Arabia and its imperialist masters want to increase their hegemony and influence in the Middle East and North and East Africa. They can't afford the possibility of an independent, sovereign Yemen. They are doing the same thing they have been doing to Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Venezuela, and Cuba, to name a few. In this new era of war and occupation which started with the occupation of Afghanistan in 2001, a dozen countries of the Middle East and North Africa have been under threat of war and occupation. The U.S. and their allies have imposed total sanctions and blockades in an attempt to break the will of sovereign nations and force independent countries to accept imperialist dictated plans and domination.

### What's Next for Yemen?

It is very obvious and clear that the war in Yemen is not a fight just between two opposite forces, it is about expanding imperialist hegemony and control in the Middle East. The war on Yemen was planned and created by the U.S. and its imperialist allies and implemented by their puppets in the region, Saudi Arabia, UAE and their coalition.

The brave Yemeni people are continuing to resist against vicious imperialist war and aggression on their country. They are sharing their stories and struggles with people around the world to counter the Saudi lies and deceptions. More and more people around the world are increasingly becoming aware of the plight and suffering of the Yemeni people under the Saudi-led war on their country.

As peace, loving people and anti-war activists around the world, we need to continue to pay central attention to this issue and build an effective opposition to the U.S. backed Saudi-led war on Yemen. We must hold our respective imperialist governments accountable for their support and participation in this genocide and atrocities. We must call for an immediate end to the war on people of Yemen and demand all foreign troops out of Yemen.

*Follow Azza on Twitter: @Azza\_R14*

## MOTHER OF ALL STRUGGLES!

### *Indigenous struggle against colonialism*



### Lee Maracle

(July 2, 1950 - )

***Sto:lo Author, Poet, Instructor [University of Toronto - INS] and Traditional Teacher First Nations House.***

“During the colonization of Canada, both land and knowledge were appropriated—that is, expropriated without permission from the owners. On the one hand, we were separated from our knowledge, and on the other, Europeans were entitled to appropriate the knowledge associated with the use of items they purchased. For instance, Johnny Whiteman purchases squaw vine for his wife's menopausal condition from Lee's gramma. He copyrights the knowledge he acquires. Lee is sent to school and cannot access her gramma's knowledge about squaw vine while away because she is separated from her gramma and someone else owns the copyright of the information. Gramma dies while Lee is in school. Johnny Whiteman publishes a book and includes the squaw vine knowledge of Lee's gramma, and on her return from school. Lee learns that in order for her to access her gramma's knowledge, she must purchase Johnny Whiteman's book. She is purchasing from the appropriator access to her inheritance. Johnny Whiteman receives all royalties from the sale of the book, while Lee, the intended inheritor of the intellectual property of her gramma, must now contribute to the wealth Johnny Whiteman gained by having access to her gramma while she was separated from her. [...]

For this appropriation to have been possible, the authority of the original people had to be abrogated and usurped by the official representatives (the Crown) of the would-be appropriators and Indigenous access to the knowledge and land severed; as well, the appropriated authority had to be rationalized and maintained. That is the very nature of how colonialism works.

The rationale for this complicated fraud was threefold: first, non-recognition of the validity of Indigenous governance; second, the infantilization of the oral nature of Indigenous knowledge as not deserving of the same recognition and protection as written knowledge; and third, the dismissal of the Indigenous relationship to the land as non-ownership and non-civilized—that is, non-private property. Private property is the foundation of citizenship and civilization in European society, and intellectual property is an extension of private property. While the power of our names, our stories, and our songs is what our inheritance is about.”

*Excerpt from "My Conversations with Canadians"*

*(Book Thug, 2017).*



# NO TROOPS TO THE BORDER!

Veterans For Peace strongly condemns the recent announcement that up to 15,000 active duty military personnel may be sent to the U.S. southern border. These troops will join the additional National Guard units that were sent last year, increasing the militarization of our borders at an alarming rate. Our immigration laws and enforcement tactics have long been at a crisis point and we are now witnessing an even more draconian surge in the use of force to prop up failed policies.

Veterans For Peace calls on all our members and all veterans who see the inhumanity and injustice of the current policies to call their Congressional Representative and Senators to demand the military be pulled back from the border and that the members of the approaching caravan be treated with dignity and processed according to international humanitarian standards as refugees. We call on all service members participating in the border deployment to follow the long American tradition of listening to their conscience and remember that they have no obligation to follow illegal orders. (For questions on military rights, contact the GI Rights Hotline or Courage to Resist)

The U.S. government, instead of welcoming the approaching refugees, the majority of whom will seek asylum under completely legal processes, is treating individuals and families fleeing to the U.S. as if they are "terrorists" (even when "counterterrorism" officials within the administration are stating that no such people exist within the caravan). The majority of these refugees are fleeing from violence in Honduras and a political situation United States' actions have made worse.

The U.S. government's claim that active duty troops are providing only innocuous support services are misleading. This is the introduction of U.S. military force as a deterrent to those who are pursuing their rights as asylum seekers fleeing from extreme poverty and violence in

their homelands, much of it due to U.S. policies. The U.S. is required under international humanitarian standards to welcome those seeking refuge.

Veterans For Peace recognizes that these orders did not happen in a vacuum, but represent a long history over several administrations of racist and violent policies that has perpetuated U.S. wars across the world and horrific domestic policies that created ICE, massive immigration detention centers and a wall that already splits towns and separates friends and families. However, the Trump administration has escalated, at an alarming pace, the implementation of new dangerous measures. President Trump is moving to fulfill on the promises of his campaign that caused an upsurge of hateful sentiment in our nation and spurred a rise in fear and anger.

Additionally, Veterans For Peace is not only concerned about the safety of individuals and families fleeing violence and the increased militarization of the border but we are extremely concerned about the continued disregard of federal law. Federal law, namely the Posse Comitatus Act, prohibits the deployment of active duty troops on domestic soil and the U.S. Government continues to ignore laws in favor of increasing militarization of U.S. domestic policy.

As military veterans from WWII to the current era of conflicts, who have trained for, and in many cases, fought in U.S. wars, we know that current U.S. policies have not only failed to bring peace but are morally bankrupt and we do not believe that more military at the border is rooted in justice or compassion.

It is more important than ever that veterans stand up, speak out and organize to disrupt the dangerous escalation of racist and unjust policies, both at home and abroad. We, as veterans, know that peace is possible, but only if resources are directed towards caring for one another, not perpetuating militarization across the globe.

From: [www.veteransforpeace.org](http://www.veteransforpeace.org)

## OUR HERITAGE



**Yolanda Ferrer Gómez**

1946-

*Cuban revolutionary leader, past general secretary of the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) and deputy to the Cuban National Assembly.*

The FMC was created to bring together all revolutionary Cuban women to work and fight for their country. We wanted to prepare them to participate actively and effectively in the economic, political, cultural, and social life of the country. This required many different programs, all of them urgently needed.

In those days, women were greatly limited by social norms. They were expected to restrict their interests to the confines of the home and to subordinate themselves to the males in the family. But there was enormous political ferment, and women felt they had to support and defend the revolution. These feelings were so strong they led women to break with traditions going back thousands of years.

Moreover, the examples of Vilma Espín, Celia Sánchez, Melba Hernández, and Haydée Santamaría—women who had fought in the underground struggle and then in the Rebel Army—were very important in this process.

Attacks by our enemy began immediately after the victory in January 1959. Women responded, making clear they weren't going to allow their revolution to be snatched away. They requested emergency medical training, and the federation organized courses across the country. They joined the Revolutionary National Militia, established in October 1959. Ten of thousands of housewives and working women, who had never handled weapons or treated the wounded, decided to join in defending their country.

*Excerpt from interview by distinguished Cuban journalist and writer Isabel Moya for the magazine of the FMC, Mujeres.*



# ACTIVISM IN VANCOUVER, CANADA

ALL REPORTS WRITTEN BY JANINE SOLANKI

## VENEZUELA SOLIDARTIY ACTIVISTS: US/CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA

Venezuela today faces a U.S.-led, Canada supported the campaign to overthrow the democratically-elected government of Venezuela. Under crippling U.S./Canada/EU sanctions, the people of Venezuela are continuously punished for their decision to build an independent country and continue to expand the Bolivarian revolutionary process. Just last month, U.S. President Trump announced further sanctions against Venezuela. The government of Canada also announced that they would be working with their right-wing counter-revolutionary allies to take the government of Venezuela to the International Criminal Court.

In Vancouver, Canada, the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign is protesting monthly against imperialist intervention, in defense of Venezuela and the Bolivarian Revolution! On October 12, activists gathered in front of the U.S. Consulate to raise picket signs demanding "U.S. Hands Off Venezuela!" and heard from local speakers between rounds of picketing. The picket was followed by an information table and display in the busy downtown plaza of the Vancouver Art Gallery, where passersby stopped to get more information and to sign on to a petition against Canada's sanctions on Venezuela and interference in the country.



Join in demanding an end to Canada and U.S. imperialist interference against Venezuela! Find out about future actions at [www.firethistime.net](http://www.firethistime.net) or follow on Facebook and Twitter @FTT\_np

## U.S. HANDS OF CUBA! CUBA SOLIDARITY ACTIVISTS CONTINUE ORGANIZING PROTEST AGAINST BLOCKADE OF CUBA

During his speech at the recent 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermúdez said: "It [the U.S. blockade] has been and continues to be a major obstacle to the country's development and the realization of the aspirations to progress and well-being of several generations of Cubans." These sentiments are echoed by supporters around the world against the cruel and immoral U.S. blockade on Cuba!

On October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Friends of Cuba Against the Blockade (FCAB) in Vancouver



held their monthly action in front of the U.S. Consulate, holding picket signs and chanting "Lift the Blockade on Cuba Now!" and "U.S. - Return Guantanamo to Cuba Now!" This monthly action was joined by coordinated actions in Montreal and Ottawa, Canada, and Kiev, Ukraine.

In between rounds of picketing, protesters heard

from local speakers who highlighted the need to increase public pressure against the blockade, as the UN 27<sup>th</sup> annual vote on a resolution against the U.S. blockade on Cuba was scheduled for October 31. The vote resulted in a victory for Cuba with only the U.S. and Israel voting against Cuba and 189 countries in favour of the resolution!

Protesters also participated in the Twitter Storm for Cuba "The World United Against the Blockade" and tweeted photos around the world with the hashtags #NoMasBloqueo and #UnblockCuba!

To join the next picket against the U.S. blockade on Cuba, visit [www.vancubavsblockade.org](http://www.vancubavsblockade.org) or follow on Facebook and Twitter @nobloqueovan

## MAKE PEACE, NOT WAR!

### MAWO VANCOUVER IN FOREFRONT STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALIST WARS AND OCCUPATIONS



October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2018 marked 17 years since the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan. Afghanistan today isn't the promises of democracy, women's liberation and education for children that

we heard 17 years ago from imperialist war propaganda. Afghanistan remains one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a baby, a child or a mother (UNICEF). This ongoing wars and occupations are not "scaling down" after 17 years – with recent U.S. and NATO troop increases there are upwards of 20,000 foreign troops in Afghanistan! Also on the rise are civilian deaths, which are at a record high in 2018, and increasingly due to U.S. airstrikes.

In Vancouver, Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) held an antiwar rally and petition campaign on October 7, and made the demand "U.S./NATO and All Foreign Troops Out of Afghanistan" heard loud and clear! Activists held picket signs, handed out antiwar literature, and talked to passersby who stopped at the information table to find out more. The rally wrapped up with a program of speakers, making sure that everyone is walking by knew that there is still a need for peace and justice loving people to get involved and protest against the ongoing war in Afghanistan.

On October 20 – 21, antiwar activists in the U.S. called for a Women's March on the Pentagon. Organizers of the march demanded the complete end to the wars abroad, the closure of foreign bases, and that the Pentagon budget is dramatically slashed to fund healthy social programs at home. For more on the Women's March on the Pentagon visit [www.marchonpentagon.com](http://www.marchonpentagon.com)

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, MAWO held a solidarity action and echoed antiwar demands, from Washington DC to Vancouver BC. The action held in busy downtown Vancouver attracted people walking by who took information and signed on to petitions against Canada's \$15 billion arms deal with Saudi Arabia. A program of speakers closed out the rally, along with photos of protesters holding picket signs and posters reading #WomenMarch4Peace which were shared online worldwide!

For upcoming antiwar events and actions, visit [www.mawovancouver.org](http://www.mawovancouver.org) or follow MAWO on Facebook and @mawovan on Twitter.

# REPEAL BILL C-51

## SCRAP BILL C-59!

FIGHTING BACK AGAINST UNDEMOCRATIC LAWS

### FIGHTING FOR DEMOCRATIC AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF ALL

### BILL C-51 AND BILL C-59, A BRIDGE TOWARDS THE BIG BROTHER SOCIETY

The Liberal Party seems in no hurry to move past the status quo of Stephen Harper's "Anti-Terrorism" Bill C-51 and all of its privacy invasions and human rights violations. Their update, Bill C-59, has been sitting in the Senate for almost six months now. In the meantime, new revelations about government agencies violating our privacy emerge all the time, with the well rehearsed answer always being, "Sorry we didn't tell you about that, but we promise we have your best interests in mind." Time and time again this has shown to be completely the opposite, and the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 continues to campaign for a full Repeal of Bill C-51 and the Scrapping of Bill C-59.

Case in point: the head of Statistics Canada was recently compelled to release a public statement assuring people their personal financial data was "safe" after it was revealed they were collecting the financial transaction data of 500,000 people without their consent or knowledge. Even worse, it's part of plan to build a massive new personal information bank with the real-time financial transaction data of hundreds of thousands of people. Global News has also reported the agency



had gotten 15 years' worth of credit rating information from a major international credit bureau which could include millions of Canadians.

Their justification? "Traditional statistics-gathering methods are no longer sufficient to accurately measure Canada's economy and societal changes."

Meanwhile, Federal government lawyers continue to insist on closed door hearings and absolute secrecy in a case regarding allegations of Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) spying on environmental activists. This began four years ago when the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association made an official complaint that CSIS and other government agencies considered opposition to the petroleum industry as a "threat to national security" – and were holding secret meetings with oil company representatives at their headquarters. The complaint cited records, released through the Access to Information Act, that suggested certain organizations were viewed as potential security risks simply because they pushed for environmental protections.

This issue is all the more serious given the broad powers Bill C-51 and C-59 give to CSIS and police forces to use against potential "national security risks". Why is the government so hell bent on secrecy in these cases? Could it be that their meetings with oil executives are not in our best interests? Are they trying to criminalize legitimate opposition to the massive resource extraction projects they are trying to push through?

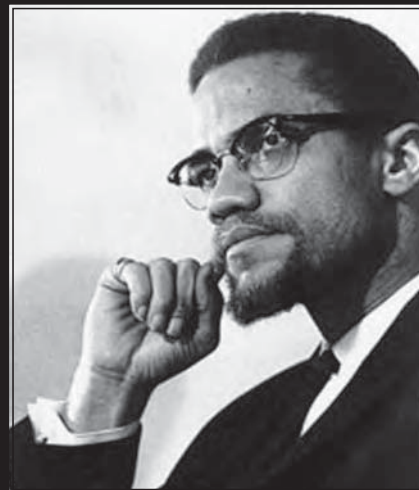
Given all of this, it's been important for the Working Group to Stop Bill C-51 to continue its public education campaign with weekly actions. As the days get shorter, October saw the last of the banner drops for the year as the Working Group moves back to straight weekly pickets for the winter months. With colleges and universities in full session, locations have focused on transit stations next to campuses in Vancouver as well as the suburbs of Coquitlam, Burnaby and Surrey. With five actions in the month – the campaign is not slowing down. The trend shown by the Canadian government is towards increased privacy invasions and human rights violations – so it's more important than ever to stand up to defend our democratic and human rights.

**Repeal Bill C-51!**

**Scrap Bill C-59!**

**Our Security Lies in Defending the Rights of All!**

## "By Any Means Necessary..."



### MALCOLM X SPEAKS

All of this in 1964. Now, in speaking like this, it doesn't mean that I am anti-American. I am not. I'm not anti-American, or un-American. And I'm not saying that to defend myself. Because if I was that, I'd have a right to be that -- after what America has done to us. This government should feel lucky that our people aren't anti-American. They should get down on their hands and knees every morning and thank God that 22 million black people have not become anti-American. You've given us every right to. The whole world would side with us, if we became anti-American. You know, that's something to think about. But we are not anti-American. We are anti or against what America is doing wrong in other parts of the world as well as here. And what she did in the Congo in 1964 is wrong. It's criminal, criminal. And what she did to the American public, to get the American public to go along with it, is criminal. What she's doing in South Vietnam is criminal. She's causing American soldiers to be murdered every day, killed every day, die every day, for no reason at all. That's wrong. Now, you're not supposed to be so blind with patriotism that you can't face reality. Wrong is wrong, no matter who does it or who says it.

*Excerpt from: Prospects for Freedom in 1965 (January 7, 1965)*



# "VENEZUELA SOLIDARITY" CANADA SPEAKING TOUR, A GREAT SUCCESS!

## PROFESSOR STEVE ELLNER TALKS IN FOUR CITIES: WINNIPEG, VANCOUVER, NANAIMO & KAMLOOPS

*By Alison Bodine*

In October, Vancouver, Kamloops, and Nanaimo British Columbia were host to a series of dynamic events bringing the truth about Venezuela to hundreds of students, working and oppressed people. At each event, guest speaker Professor Steve Ellner of the Universidad de Oriente in Puerto La Cruz, Venezuela was tasked with offering his perspective on the provocative questions – “What is Really Happening in Venezuela?” There is no doubt that his presentation, alongside those of the other featured speakers, generated lively and important discussions that are a great contribution in fight against U.S. & Canada sanctions on Venezuela and the mass media lies and deceptions that come along with such attacks.

The first event of the tour held in Vancouver, BC was a great success. It was organized by the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign, and endorsed by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC), Friends of Cuba Against the U.S. Blockade (FCAB-Vancouver), Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), Iranian Community Against War (ICAW), Youth Third-World Alliance, Fire This Time Newspaper, Battle of Ideas Press - Canada, Stories from the Salish Sea, Communist Party of Canada-ML, Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) – Vancouver.

Speaking front of a large “U.S./Canada Hands Off Venezuela!” Professor Ellner

spoke to a full room of 120 people at the Central Branch of the Vancouver Public Library, drawing on his 40+ years of living, researching, writing and teaching in Venezuela which has given him a unique perspective on the Bolivarian revolutionary process in Venezuela that began nearly 20 years ago with the election of President Hugo Chavez in 1998.

Before hearing from Professor Ellner, participants at the Vancouver event also had the honour and privilege to hear directly from Venezuela that night, with a special videoconference session with Carlos Ron, Vice Minister of Foreign Relations for North America at the Venezuela’s Ministry of Popular Power for Foreign Affairs. Professor Ellner’s talk was also preceded by an introduction by Alan Freeman, a Marxist scholar and founding member of the Venezuela Peace Committee – Winnipeg. The successful event was opened and closed by Coast Salish Elder Kelly White.

It is also important to note, that although supporters of Venezuela’s violent and counter-revolutionary opposition came to the event in order to try and disrupt it, they were overwhelmed by the positive and open nature of the discussion



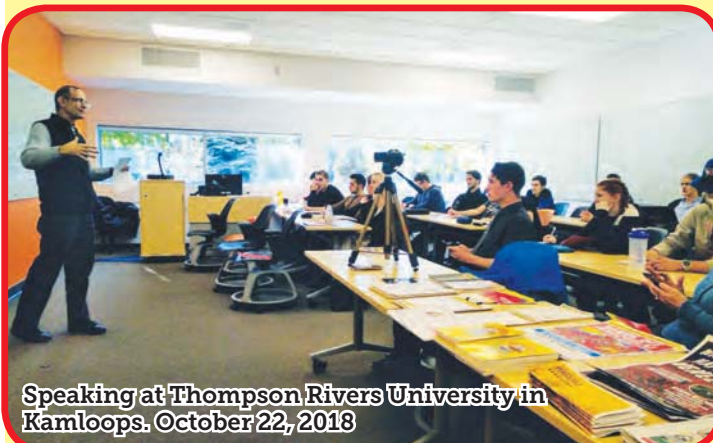
Full house at the Vancouver speaking event, October 21, 2018

and atmosphere. This was another victory for an already successful event in defense of the sovereignty and self-determination of Venezuela.

The next day the BC tour continued at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops. Here, Professor Ellner was hosted by Professors who wanted to expose their students, and the University community as a whole, to the reality of Venezuela today. Professor Ellner delivered an engaging and thought-provoking presentation that definitely introduced Venezuelan history and current events in a new and important context for the participants.

The tour next stop that evening was at Vancouver Island University in Nanaimo, BC in an event co-hosted by Friends of Venezuela in Nanaimo and the Vancouver Island University Faculty Association International Solidarity and Human Rights Committee. Professor Imogene Lim, who chairs the Committee introduced the speakers and facilitated the lively discussion that followed. Alan Freeman of the Venezuela Peace Committee, and was later joined by Professor Ellner, who spoke over the phone due to weather that prevented travel to the island that day.

Both of these important events, and the BC tour as a whole brought the truth about Venezuela to workers, students and activists



Speaking at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops. October 22, 2018

who would not have otherwise heard about what is happening on the ground due to mass media lies and distortions.

As the U.S. government and their allies like the government of Canada continue to increase their brutal sanctions and threats against Venezuela, it is the task of working and oppressed people to organize in defence of Venezuela's sovereignty and self-determination. The Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice Venezuela Solidarity Campaign will continue to organize events and actions about Venezuela, including more international and local guest speakers. To follow the FTT Venezuela Solidarity Campaign's ongoing actions, which will include other speaking tours, please visit [www.firethistime.net](http://www.firethistime.net) or follow on Facebook and Twitter @FTT\_np.

The "What is Really Happening in Venezuela?" speaking tour with Professor Ellner was part of a larger tour coordinated between the U.S. and Canada by the Campaign to End U.S. & Canada Sanctions on Venezuela, which also included an event in Winnipeg, Canada organized by the Venezuela Peace Committee. In all, Professor Ellner will be hosted by cities across the U.S. and Canada for more than 30 events in just about two months. For more information about the Campaign visit: [www.afgj.org/focus-areas/venezuela-solidarity-campaign/campaign-to-end-us-and-canada-sanctions-against-venezuela](http://www.afgj.org/focus-areas/venezuela-solidarity-campaign/campaign-to-end-us-and-canada-sanctions-against-venezuela)

In the next pages are excerpts from the talk given by Prof. Steve Ellner in Vancouver.

Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette

# "WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING IN VENEZUELA"

**PUBLIC FORUM, OCTOBER 21, 2018  
EXCERPTS OF PROF. STEVE ELLNER'S TALK**

I see myself as defending one central thesis, one central position, and that is that what is happening in Venezuela is complex, not simple. Just that statement is antithetically opposed to what the Trump administration is saying. The Trump administration demonizes President Maduro and supports, directly and indirectly, the radical faction of the opposition. He is simplifying, basically saying that there are good guys and bad guys. It is a much more complex situation than that.

Typically, what happens it that two topics get conflated. Two topics, that really should be

separated, get dealt with at the same time. One is the economic problems. What is said is largely true. The situation in Venezuela economically is very difficult. I believe that the Venezuelan government is partly responsible for that but, there are other factors as well. The price of oil, which has declined. Venezuela has always been very dependant on oil, going back to the 1920's. This is a

historical tendency - when the price of oil goes up everybody is happy, the politicians

are popular, and then when the price of oil declines, visa-versa. That has always been the case historically, and it is happening now.

I personally believe that part of the problem is that the government has over-subsidized products. These products are for the poor, which is good, but there is a market, the laws of supply and demand. Venezuela is not a socialist country; it is a capitalist country. 80% of the economy is privately run, so you have to recognize the market. If you subsidize prices, that I believe justifiable, there is then a disparity between the cost of production and what is being sold. In other words, you are selling products or services below the cost of production, that is a recipe for problems. That is the second explanation.



**2nd Congress of "Women in the Revolution".  
October 23, 2018**



**PSUV Congress of Indigenous Peoples.  
October 12, 2018**



**Event MC Alison Bodine and guest speakers: Steve Ellner & Alan Freeman, October 21, 2018**



**Support for Venezuela by soccer fans in the Basque Country, October 12, 2018**



The third explanation and Alan [Freeman] did a good job briefly talking about that, and Carlos Ron did also, is that there is a war against Venezuela. The Chavistas use the term “economic war – guerra economica – in Spanish,” I use the word war because part of it is economic, but it also has other ramifications. It is not just the problems that Carlos talked about. For instance, Citgo, which is a very important company in the United States, an oil/gasoline company that is 100% Venezuelan-owned, and they can’t send their profit back to Venezuela. Alan said a \$1 billion since the sanction began a little over a year ago. Also, Joe Emersberger, an expert who presents a lot of facts, which is good empirically, has stated \$1 billion, Venezuela just in that has lost \$1 billion. But also, there is what Carlos was saying about the fact that banks are afraid to handle money coming from the Venezuelan government. \$1.6 billion was frozen in a financial clearinghouse in Belgium. That money was assigned to the purchase of food and medicine. These things are happening.

Not only that, there is a definite relationship between what the Trump administration is saying, and before Trump, Obama and the investment activity of corporations. Obama issued an executive order, I think it was in 2015, then it was re-issued bi-yearly, and that executive order stated that the Venezuelan government was an “extraordinary” and “unusual” threat, I am quoting the statement: “A threat to U.S. national security.” I lot of people said that it was just talking, there wasn’t any implementation of anything, just that statement.

investing in Venezuela. They have operations, but they don’t have new investments in Venezuela. Companies such as Halliburton and other service companies, they’re not engaged in direct operations. They have contracts, but they are giving those contracts to others to carry out – why? I would say this pressure from the Trump administration. Obviously, they are not necessarily friendly to the Maduro government, but they had investment, they were making money. Now, they’re making deals with other small-time operators, and those small-time operators are using the personnel of Halliburton, they are renting out the equipment to these small-time operators, but it means less money for the Venezuelan government. That is what has happened, and that is a fact of this war against Venezuela.

Many of you may know that in the region over the last several years, beginning with the election of Macri in Argentina, there has been a right-wing swing. In Brazil, the progressive government was impeached in an unconstitutional action. Dilma Rousseff was impeached, and a conservative came in. In Chile, President Piñera was elected by two parties that were associated with Pinochet. So, you have right-wing Presidents throughout the region. The Trump administration is sending their top officials, and calling on those governments, that are already anti-Venezuela, to play an activist role. Nikki Haley, the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, went to Colombia. When he was inaugurated, she told President Duque from the right-wing party of Uribe, ‘we expect you to play a lead role,’ not any old role, ‘a lead

The one U.S. oil company that stayed in Venezuela after Exxon left, and Conoco Philips, two very important investors in Venezuela, they left, but Chevron stayed. At the time of this executive order of Obama, they stopped investing in Venezuela. They have operations, but they don’t have new investments in Venezuela. Companies such as Halliburton and other service companies, they’re not engaged in direct operations. They have contracts, but they are giving those contracts to others to carry out – why? I would say this pressure from the Trump administration. Obviously, they are not necessarily friendly to the Maduro government, but they had investment, they were making money. Now, they’re making deals with other small-time operators, and those small-time operators are using the personnel of Halliburton, they are renting out the equipment to these small-time operators, but it means less money for the Venezuelan government. That is what has happened, and that is a fact of this war against Venezuela.

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on the table.’ Vice-President Pence has done the same thing. These are not low-down officials; these are top-officials in the Trump administration. That didn’t happen in the past. So, you can say that the opposition to the Venezuelan government has reached a new threshold under the Trump administration.

In the 1990’s the Venezuelan economy, under neoliberalism, ceased to be Venezuelan. Steel, which was a Venezuelan company, was privatized, and a foreign consortium bought it. The electricity company of Caracas, which was owned by the family of one of the leaders of the opposition Maria Corina Machado, was bought out by a U.S. company. The telephone company was sold and eventually bought by the U.S. company Verizon. The oldest bank in Venezuela, the Bank of Venezuela, Banco de Venezuela, was bought out by Santander. The other big bank Provincial was bought out by Bilbao-Vizcaya of Spain also. You go from one to the other to the other to the other. Cement, cement was the pride of Venezuelan capitalism because the owner was the Rockefeller of Venezuela, Eugenio Mendoza. It was bought by the Japanese and then sold to CEMEX of Mexico. So, out of neoliberalism, the Venezuelan economy ceased to be Venezuelan.


Chavez nationalized those companies. If the opposition returns to power, they support neoliberalism, and they are fairly united about economic policy. But, about social programs, and about participation in the election, they are not united.

I will give you two examples. One is a political leader by the name of Timoteo Zambrano. Timoteo Zambrano was involved in the dialogue with Maduro in Santo Domingo, and he stated that members of the opposition were opposing the dialogue but asking him to negotiate with Maduro for certain concessions. They are playing two games. On the one hand, publicly, they were saying that they are opposed to negotiations with Maduro, on the other hand, they were asking him, as a negotiator, to try and get something out of the Venezuelan government. The opposition called him ‘a collaborator.’ You know, the term goes back to the Nazi occupation of France, who were the collaborators? The collaborators were the Frenchmen who were in cahoots with the Nazis. That’s the connotation, and they call him a ‘collaborator.’ That’s the radicals against the moderates.

The second example is much more important, and that is the case of Henri Falcon. Henri Falcon was the governor of the state of Lara, a very important state. The major city is Barquisimeto, one of



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the biggest cities in Venezuela. Falcon participated in the elections [the 2017 gubernatorial elections], along with all the other major parties, with one minor exception, the party of Marina Corina Machado, who I mentioned. Falcon was defeated and said, 'I accept my defeat,' and by accepting his defeat, he was catapulted on to centre-stage because people admired that. Some of the parties of the opposition, the radical parties of the opposition like Voluntad Popular and Primera Justicia did not accept their defeats in different gubernatorial races, but he did, and he announced his candidacy for President. He was the main candidate running against Maduro.

The Trump administration is promoting radicalization within Venezuela. It is promoting polarization within Venezuela. That is a shame, because the one hope for Venezuela, at least in the short run, is dialogue. People always ask me, 'what do you think is the best-case scenario for Venezuela?' I would say that the best-case scenario for Venezuela is dialogue with the opposition. The economic situation is very difficult, and Maduro has to take very difficult decisions. The decisions that are not going to be popular in the short-run, but it's the only way out. Now, if he has an opposition that is attacking him all of the time, and the opposition is going to take to the streets, anything that he does, he can't do anything that is beneficial for the whole country. He can't do anything, even things that the opposition supports, because if he was to do it, the opposition would be in the streets trying to overthrow him. The hope is dialogue, and that is exactly what the Trump administration is trying to undercut.

There is so much that I would like to say, but I want to sum up with a couple of things. I believe that there are positive aspects of the Chavista governments, and there are negative aspects. I believe that on social policy they have been very positive; they have promoted empowerment, the participation of the popular sectors of

the population who design public works projects for their communities, they get funding and oversee the carrying out of those projects. That means participation, that means incorporation, but there are also handouts. That's negative. People have to work for what they get, although in some cases free items are justified. There are positive sides and negative sides.

That's also true with a lot of other things. But, there is one area which I think is just positive, I don't see anything negative. That is foreign policy. That is exactly why the U.S. government is attacking Chavez and now Maduro because they have promoted this idea of a multi-polar world. This was Chavez' language when he came to power in 1999. Chavez promoted these organizations that have already been mentioned: UNASUR (Union of South American Nations), CELAC (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States), ALBA (the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas). These organizations are not just paper organizations. UNASUR played a very important role against the violence in Bolivia in 2009, and also in 2006 when Evo Morales assumed the Presidency. The Community of South American Countries played an important role. Then, in 2009 UNASUR intervened in favour of stability. As well as when there was an attempted coup against Correa in Ecuador, UNASUR played an important role.

That goes against the tradition that when there is hot-spot in Latin America, it is the United States that comes in. The United States was the main player. UNASUR does not include the United States. CELAC does not include the United States. It is not based on pan-Americanism, which takes in the entire hemisphere, including Canada. It is based on another concept of Latin American unity. The position of Chavez was, 'we support the economic union with North America, with Canada, the United States, but we have to develop ourselves first so that we can negotiate with you guys from a position of equality.' That is the answer to pan-Americanism, and I think that that is just positive.

I will sum up by saying two things. One is, there are problems. Anybody who pro-Chavez, and in conversation says 'no, everything is hunky-dory,' they are not telling the truth. There are problems, and there are errors that have been committed. If you don't recognize

those problems, then you are going to lose credibility. But, there are also positive aspects. No matter what happens in Venezuela, those positive aspects will serve as a point of reference, as a point of inspiration for many, many years to come. I think that that is what the right-wingers in Venezuela, in Latin America, in the United States, are trying to act against. This idea that there have been successes. Some aspects are successful that have promoted participatory democracy, that has promoted the incorporation of the marginalized sectors of the population. These are the sectors of the population that aren't even Union members; they don't have Unions, they are not members of the industrial workers, they're members of the informal economy. They are now being incorporated into the decision-making process.

It seems to me that the work of solidarity; the work of trying to get the governments of North America, the governments of Europe to take their hands off Venezuela, to leave Venezuela alone, to let the Venezuelans resolve their problems peacefully, that campaign will only be successful if you understand the positive aspects of the Chavista experience.

Thank you.



## Battle of Ideas Press

### Revolution & Counter Revolution in Venezuela



By Alison Bodine

Writer and researcher on Venezuela. She is a member of the Fire This Time Newspaper Editorial Board and is the coordinator of the Fire This Time Venezuela Solidarity Campaign. Alison Bodine is an electrical designer based in Vancouver, Canada.

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By Manuel Yepe

“When we have wanted to overthrow other governments, we have done so in the best interests of the people of those countries.” Such a tender philosophy was the one that James Robert Clapper Jr, former head of the National Security Agency (NSA), declared before a congressional committee in Washington, D.C. Clapper did this on May 8, 2018, with all naturalness, trying to justify Washington’s electoral interference in more than eighty countries.

In the same way, this gentleman expressed himself when he promoted his book *Facts and Fears*, where he tackles issues such as alleged Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential elections and in the Syrian conflict. In Syria, the United States has been the main support for terrorists seeking to overthrow the legitimate government of that Middle Eastern country.

The interference in the electoral processes of more than eighty countries throughout history was done thinking “in the best interests of the people” of these nations, Clapper reiterated in an interview granted to Bloomberg, when speaking of the American history of interference in the elections of other nations.

Clapper is remembered in his country for hiding the truth about the massive surveillance program developed by the National Security Agency (NSA) before it was brought to light by Edward Snowden.

Certainly, intervention in other people’s electoral processes has long been a recurring component of Washington’s foreign policy.

In Latin America, the expulsion from power of a legitimately-elected president is considered the most condemnable intervention, although they abound, practically, in the history of all the countries in the region. Jacobo Arbenz, in Guatemala; Salvador Allende, in Chile, or Joao Goulart, in Brazil, are just some examples that

have preceded in time the recent Manuel Zelaya in Honduras; Fernando Lugo in Paraguay and Dilma Rousseff in Brazil.

On a global scale, it is known that, in 1947, the U.S. forced the Italian government to exclude all communists and socialists in the first post-war cabinet in exchange for U.S. economic aid to rebuild Europe destroyed by the World War.

Thereafter, the CIA (U.S. Central Intelligence Agency) did everything in its power, legally or illegally, to prevent the participation of Communists in the Italian government, while covertly financing Christian Democratic candidates there and elsewhere in Western Europe. The Italian elections of April 1948 were the first in which the CIA’s intervention in the affairs of another country was felt. Without the CIA, the Italian Communist Party would have won those 1948 elections broadly.

From then on, for decades, whenever the Communists, either in alliance with the Socialists or on their own, threatened an electoral triumph, the United States raised the threat of exclusion from the Marshall Plan to prevent it.

The now-retired intelligence official explains that he wrote the book to inform the public of the “both internal and external” threats facing the United States, and to explain that President Donald Trump is not the problem of the American country, but only the symbol of a broader problem because “the truth is relative.”

On February 13, U.S. intelligence directors warned the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee that “Russia appears to be preparing to repeat the tricks it unleashed in 2016 as the 2018 midterm elections approach: cyberattacking, filtering, manipulating social networks, and perhaps others.”

Days later, special prosecutor Robert Mueller used social networks to formulate accusations against 13 Russians and 3 companies run by a businessman linked to the Kremlin in order to attack Hillary Clinton, support Donald Trump

and sow discord.

Most Americans were understandably impacted by what they saw as an unprecedented attack on their political system. However, intelligence veterans and academics who have studied covert operations have a different and rather revealing view.

If any government in the world totally lacks the authority and moral standing to condemn the interference of any nation, powerful or weak, large or small, rich or poor, in the internal affairs of another, that nation is the United States because of its long history of abuses against its enemies as well as its allies.

But for Washington to go out and denounce or protest the interference of any nation in its electoral affairs is simply an insult to the collective intelligence of humanity; an unacceptable shame from any point of view.

October 11, 2018.



*Manuel E. Yepe, is a lawyer, economist and journalist. He was a professor at the Higher Institute of International Relations in Havana. He was Cuba’s ambassador to Romania, general director of the Prensa Latina agency; vice president of the Cuban Institute of Radio and Television; founder and national director of the Technological Information System (TIPS) of the United Nations Program for Development in Cuba, and secretary of the Cuban Movement for the Peace and Sovereignty of the Peoples.*

*A CubaNews translation. Edited by  
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# EE. UU. JUSTIFICA INJERENCIA ELECTORAL EN OTROS PAÍSES

**\* EN ESPAÑOL \***

*Por Manuel Yepe*

“Cuando intentamos manipular o influir en las elecciones de otras naciones, o incluso cuando hemos querido derrocar sus gobiernos, lo hemos hecho pensando en los mejores intereses de la gente de esos países”.

Esa filosofía tan tierna fue la que declaró ante un comité judicial en Washington, D.C., el 8 de mayo de 2018, con toda naturalidad, James Robert Clapper Jr., ex jefe de la Agencia de Seguridad Nacional (NSA) pretendiendo justificar la injerencia electoral de Washington en más de ochenta países.

En igual sentido se manifestó este señor cuando promocionaba su libro *Facts and Fears* (Hechos y Temores), donde aborda temas como la supuesta injerencia rusa en las elecciones presidenciales de Estados Unidos y en el conflicto de Siria, donde Estados Unidos ha sido el principal soporte de los terroristas que buscan derrocar al gobierno legítimo de ese país del Medio Oriente.

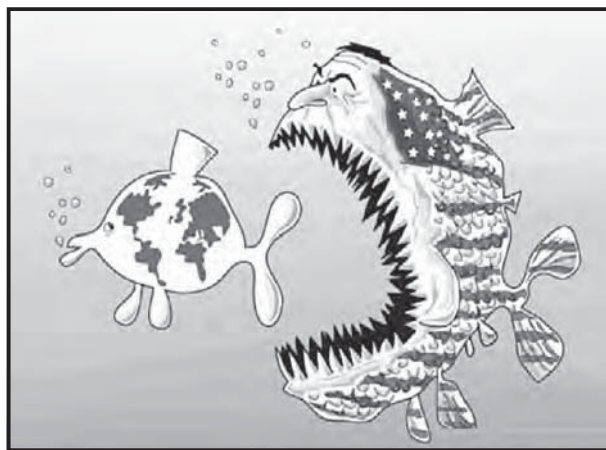
La interferencia en los procesos electorales de más de ochenta países a lo largo de la historia se hizo pensando “en los mejores intereses de la gente” de estas naciones, es reiterada igualmente por Clapper en una entrevista concedida a Bloomberg, al hablar del historial estadounidense de injerencia en los comicios de otras naciones.

Clapper es recordado en su país por haber ocultado la verdad sobre el programa de vigilancia masiva desarrollado por la Agencia de Seguridad Nacional (NSA, por sus siglas en inglés) antes de que lo sacara a la luz Edward Snowden.

Ciertamente, la intervención en procesos electorales ajenos ha sido durante mucho tiempo un componente muy reiterado de la política exterior de Washington.

a los recientes de Manuel Zelaya en Honduras; Fernando Lugo en Paraguay y Dilma Rousseff en Brasil.

A escala mundial, se conoce que, en 1947, EE.UU. obligó al gobierno italiano a excluir a todos los comunistas y socialistas que integraban el primer gabinete de la posguerra a cambio de la ayuda económica estadounidense para reconstruir a Europa destruida por la Guerra Mundial. A partir



de entonces, la CIA (Agencia Central de Inteligencia estadounidense) hizo todo lo que estuvo a su alcance, legal o ilegalmente, para evitar la llegada de comunistas al gobierno italiano, al tiempo que financió de manera encubierta a candidatos democristianos en ese país y en los demás de Europa Occidental.

Las elecciones italianas de abril de 1948 fueron las primeras en las que se hizo sentir la intervención de la CIA en los asuntos de otro país. Sin la CIA, el Partido Comunista Italiano habría ganado con amplitud esas elecciones de 1948. A partir de entonces, y durante décadas, cada vez que los comunistas, ya fuera en alianza con los socialistas o por su cuenta, amenazaban con un triunfo electoral Estados Unidos

alzaba la amenaza de exclusión del Plan Marshal para impedirlo.

El ya retirado funcionario de Inteligencia explica que escribió el libro para informar al público de las amenazas “tanto internas como externas” que enfrenta Estados Unidos, y explicar que el presidente Donald Trump, no es el problema del país norteamericano, sino sólo símbolo de un problema más amplio porque “la verdad es relativa”.

El 13 de febrero, los directores estadounidenses de inteligencia advirtieron al Comité de Inteligencia del Senado de Estados Unidos que “Rusia parece estar preparándose para repetir las artimañas que desató en 2016 ahora que se aproximan las elecciones de mitad de período de 2018: ciberatacar, filtrar, manipular las redes sociales y quizá otras.

Días después, el fiscal especial Robert Mueller utilizó las redes sociales para formular imputaciones contra 13 rusos y 3 empresas dirigidas por un empresario vinculado al Kremlin con el fin de atacar a Hillary Clinton, apoyar a Donald Trump y sembrar discordia.

La mayoría de los estadounidenses fueron comprensiblemente impactados por lo que consideraron un ataque sin precedentes contra su sistema político. Sin embargo, los veteranos de inteligencia y académicos que han estudiado las operaciones encubiertas tienen una opinión distinta y bastante reveladora.

Si algún gobierno del mundo carece totalmente de autoridad y moral para condenar la intromisión de una nación cualquiera, poderosa o débil, grande o pequeña, rica o pobre, en los asuntos internos de otra, esa nación es Estados Unidos por su largo historial de abusos contra sus enemigos y también contra sus aliados.

Pero que salga Washington a denunciar o a protestar por la intromisión de cualquier nación en sus asuntos electorales es sencillamente un insulto a la inteligencia colectiva de la Humanidad; una vergüenza inaceptable desde cualquier punto de vista.

*Desde: [www.poresto.net](http://www.poresto.net)*

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continued from page 15

the Middle East and Africa. Over 110,000 migrants crossed the sea in the first ten months of 2018 – and nearly 2,000 have died in the waters (International Organization for Migration – IOM).

Since 2015, when over 1 million refugees fled to Europe, a majority from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, Doctors Without Borders and other international aid organizations have condemned European governments for their callous treatment of immigrants and refugees. In a statement from July 2018, they explain, “The European political that have been taken during the past weeks have had deadly consequences. There has been a cold-blooded decision to leave men, women and children to drown in the Mediterranean Sea. This is outrageous and unacceptable.”

Whether in North America or Europe, immigrants and refugees face the same inhuman treatment and deplorable living conditions, all while trying to stay safe from human traffickers and criminal gangs.

Although the European Union (EU) claims that they have now abandoned a plan to set up illegal “regional disembarkation platforms” on the Southern coast of the Mediterranean – which would to transfer the crisis from Greece, Italy and Spain to North African countries, EU continues to allow immigrants to live in overcrowded and inhuman camps throughout Europe.

The mayor of Lesbos, where one of these camps is located, recently told the Guardian newspaper, “I’ve run out of ways of describing conditions that are beyond deplorable...I recently compared what they are doing here



**Above: Honduran refugees heading to the U.S. on the road linking Ciudad Hidalgo and Tapachula, Mexico on October 21, 2018. Bottom: U.S. President Trump tries to raise fear about these migrants on October 25, 2018.**

to Guantánamo, but of course I’ve never been to Guantánamo. Perhaps concentration camp would be better.”

#### Is Canada Better Than the U.S. and the EU?

So, what about Canada? Immigrants and refugees to Canada also face violence, discrimination, poverty and lack of access to basic services. The government of Canada also continues to uphold the Safe Third Country Agreement with the U.S. This agreement allows the government of Canada to turn away asylum seekers who come to a Canadian border after travelling through the U.S. (which is designated a “safe” country by this agreement) – therefore forcing refugees to complete dangerous crossings over non-official borders.

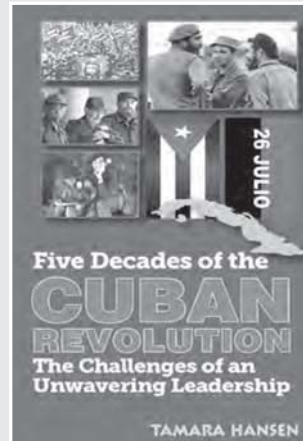
The UN Refugee Agency reported that in 2017 50,469 refugees claimed asylum in Canada, of which 40% crossed through the non-official border. This represents the highest number of people in the last ten years. One would think that to fulfil the international law and process the asylum applications quickly, proper funding and resources would be allocated to the border. Instead, the government of Canada has let a long backlog pile up and left refugees, including families and children locked within in limbo, or living in detention centres.

To deal with this self-imposed back-log, the Canada Border Services Agency announced in October 2018 that they would be bringing back quotas for deportations – which will be set a 10,000 per year. A quota-system for deporting people back to misery and devastation? Is that really a solution to increasing claims for asylum?



## Battle of Ideas Press

### 5 Decades of the Cuban Revolution The Challenges of an Unwavering Leadership



By Tamara Hansen

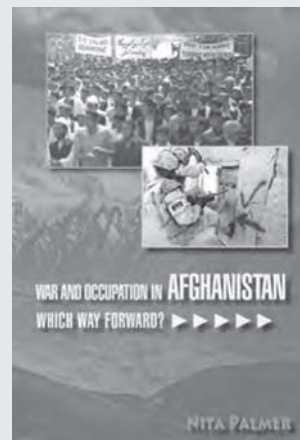
Coordinator of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC). She is also an editorial board member of The Fire This Time newspaper. She has travelled to Cuba over a dozen times and has written extensively on Cuban politics since 2003.

April 2010, paperback, \$14.00

314 pages, illustrated,

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### WAR AND OCCUPATION IN AFGHANISTAN WHICH WAY FORWARD?



By Nita Palmer

Author and researcher on the war in Afghanistan. She is a member of the editorial board of Vancouver, Canada-based social justice newspaper Fire This Time.

January 2010, paperback, \$7.00

226 pages, illustrated,

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## Immigration and Refugee Problems Are a Result of Capitalist and Imperialist Disorder

Whether in the U.S., Canada or the EU there is no question as to what has caused the migration crisis.

The Hondurans, El Salvadorians, Guatemalans and all people that have made the dangerous procession North are fleeing the disaster created by capitalism and imperialism in their countries – they are refugees of capitalist disorder, and they have every moral right to show up at the White House's front door.

The Syrians, Afghans, Iraqis, Yemenis, Libyans, and everyone that risks their lives on board an overcrowded boat through the Mediterranean are also refugees of the capitalist disorder. Their lives have been ripped asunder by wars, occupations and economic devastation. If bombs manufactured in the UK or Germany have killed their loved ones and destroyed their countries, then they too have every moral right to be welcomed by the EU with open arms.

### Open the Borders Now!

"We'll do up to anywhere between 10 [sic] and 15,000 military personnel, on top of border patrol, ICE and everybody else at the border...Nobody's coming in." – President Trump (end of October, to reporters at the White House)

"I hope there won't be that, but I will tell you this – anybody throwing stones, rocks ... we will consider that a firearm because there's not much difference." – President Trump

If the U.S. administration has its way, up to 15,000 troops could be mobilized to the U.S./Mexico border to attack internationally protected asylum seekers. This is one of the rawest and most brutal parts of U.S. immigration policy, but it is not the idea of President Trump only – President Obama

sent 12,000 National Guard troops, following the deployment of President Bush of 6,000. Deploying military troops against immigrants and refugees is a brutal, bipartisan policy.

It is a policy as familiar and as inhuman as the other crimes that have become commonplace – as family detentions and separations, as Muslim bans and illegal treatment of asylum seekers. And this applies in the U.S., EU and Canada.

The obligations of the governments of the U.S., Canada and the EU are deeper than international laws and agreements. Their responsibility and the debt they owe to the poor, working and oppressed people around the world is only going to increase. The economic crisis, including the crisis of overproduction, plagues capitalist and imperialist countries, which in turn means that wars and occupations for new markets, and the devastation that comes with them, will also continue. The governments of the U.S., Canada, the UK and the EU are responsible for the capitalist and imperialist disorder that has devastated poor, working and oppressed people at home and around the world. People are fleeing violence and economic devastation brought on by the U.S. government and their allies – and these governments have the human and moral obligation to accept immigrants and refugees unconditionally with open arms.

There can be no other argument. Imperialist and colonial governments are obliged to respond to the crisis of refugees with humanity. This means legal status, and complete democratic, civil and human rights for all immigrants and refugees, and their families, including for those coming to Canada. This applies whether there are 10's, 100's, 1,000's or 100,000's demanding that the governments that destroyed their homes and futures offer them protection and a somewhere safe to be.

*Follow Alison on Twitter: @Alisoncolette*

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**END SANCTIONS AGAINST VENEZUELA!**

**NO REGIME CHANGE IN VENEZUELA!**

**FRIDAY DECEMBER 7 2018**

1. **PROTEST ACTION 4PM**  
**U.S. / CANADA HANDS OFF VENEZUELA!**  
**US CONSULATE IN VANCOUVER - 1070 WEST PENDER ST.**
  2. **INFO TABLING & PETITION 5:30PM**  
**NO MORE U.S. / CANADA SANCTIONS & THREATS!**  
**RESPECT THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF VENEZUELAN PEOPLE!**  
**VANCOUVER ART GALLERY - ROBSON ST. AND HOWE ST.**
- FIRE THIS TIME - VENEZUELA SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN**  
**WWW.FIRETHISTIME.NET**



**LIFT THE U.S. BLOCKADE ON CUBA NOW!**



**RETURN GUANTANAMOTO TO CUBA NOW!**

**MONTHLY PROTEST ACTION!**  
**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 17<sup>2018</sup> 4PM**  
**U.S. CONSULATE 1075 W. PENDER ST. DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER**

FRIENDS OF CUBA AGAINST THE U.S. BLOCKADE-VANCOUVER  
 NOBLOQUEOVANCOUVER@GMAIL.COM @NOBLOQUEOVAN  
**WWW.VANCUBAVSBLOCKADE.ORG**

**STOP SAUDI AGGRESSION & KILLINGS!**

**VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY SAUDI ARABIA - FROM KHAISHOUBI TO YEMEN**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30<sup>2018</sup> 7:30PM**  
 BRITANNIA COMMUNITY CENTRE  
 CANUCKS FAMILY ROOM  
 1661 MAPLE ST. @ COMMERCIAL DR.  
 VANCOUVER, CANADA

**SPEAKERS:**  
 AZZA ROJBI  
 YEMENI- CANADIAN  
 MEMBER & TUNISIA SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVIST

**SHAKER AL ABEIDI**  
 YEMENI- CANADIAN  
 SOCIAL JUSTICE ACTIVIST

**MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION (MAWO)**  
 @MAWO\_VAN  
**WWW.MAWOVANCOUVER.ORG**

**FREE PUBLIC COMMUNITY FORUM**



**THE SALISH SEA VS. THE N.E.B**

**NO TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE EXPANSION!**

**DAY OF ACTION FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23**

**3:30pm PROTEST**  
 NEB Vancouver Office 800 Burrard @ Robson

**COMMUNITY DISCUSSION 6:00pm**  
 Vancouver Public Library - Central Branch  
 350 W. Georgia @ Hamilton

**CLIMATE CONVERGENCE WWW.CLIMATECONVERGENCE.CA**